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LAST DAYS
OF JESUS.



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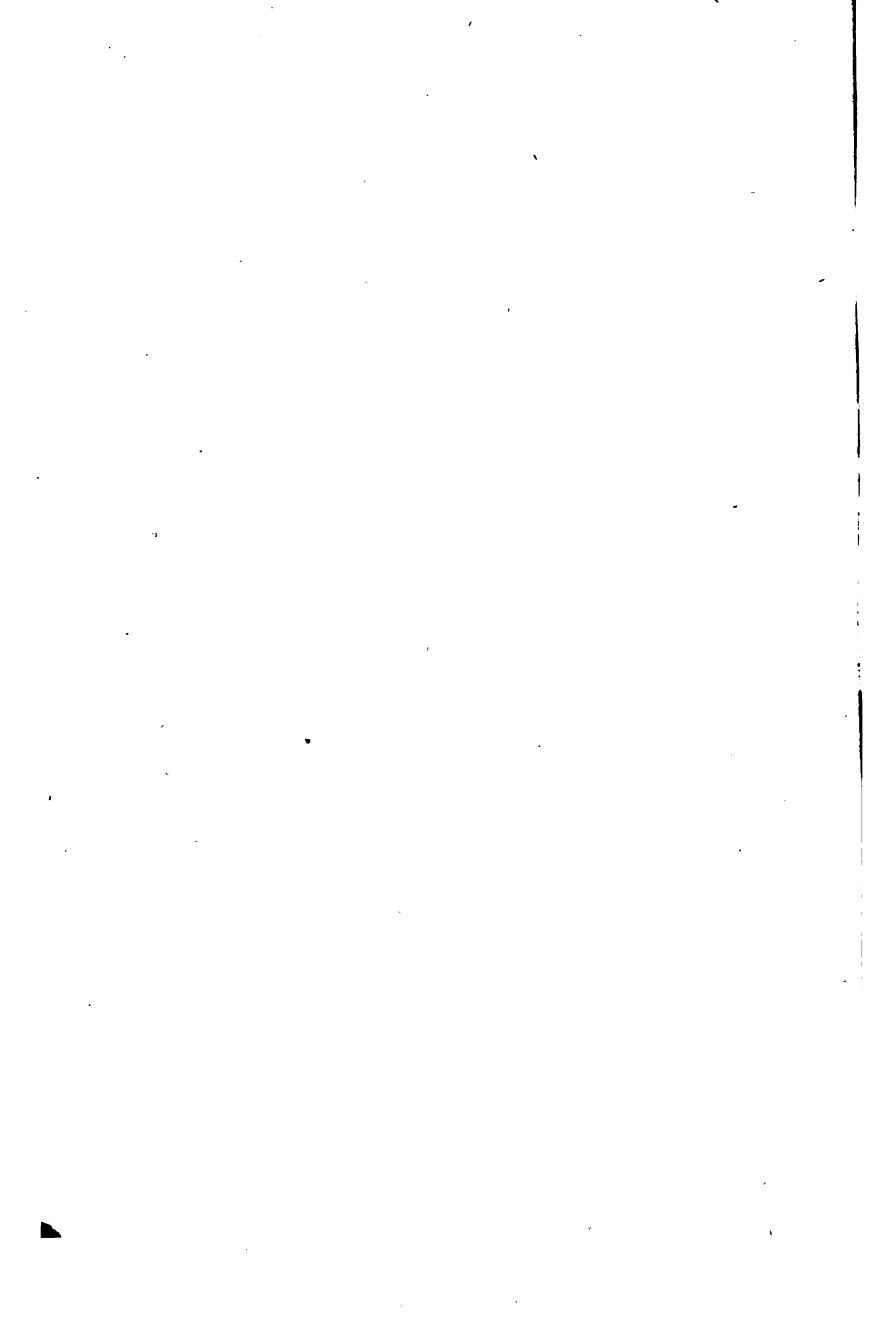


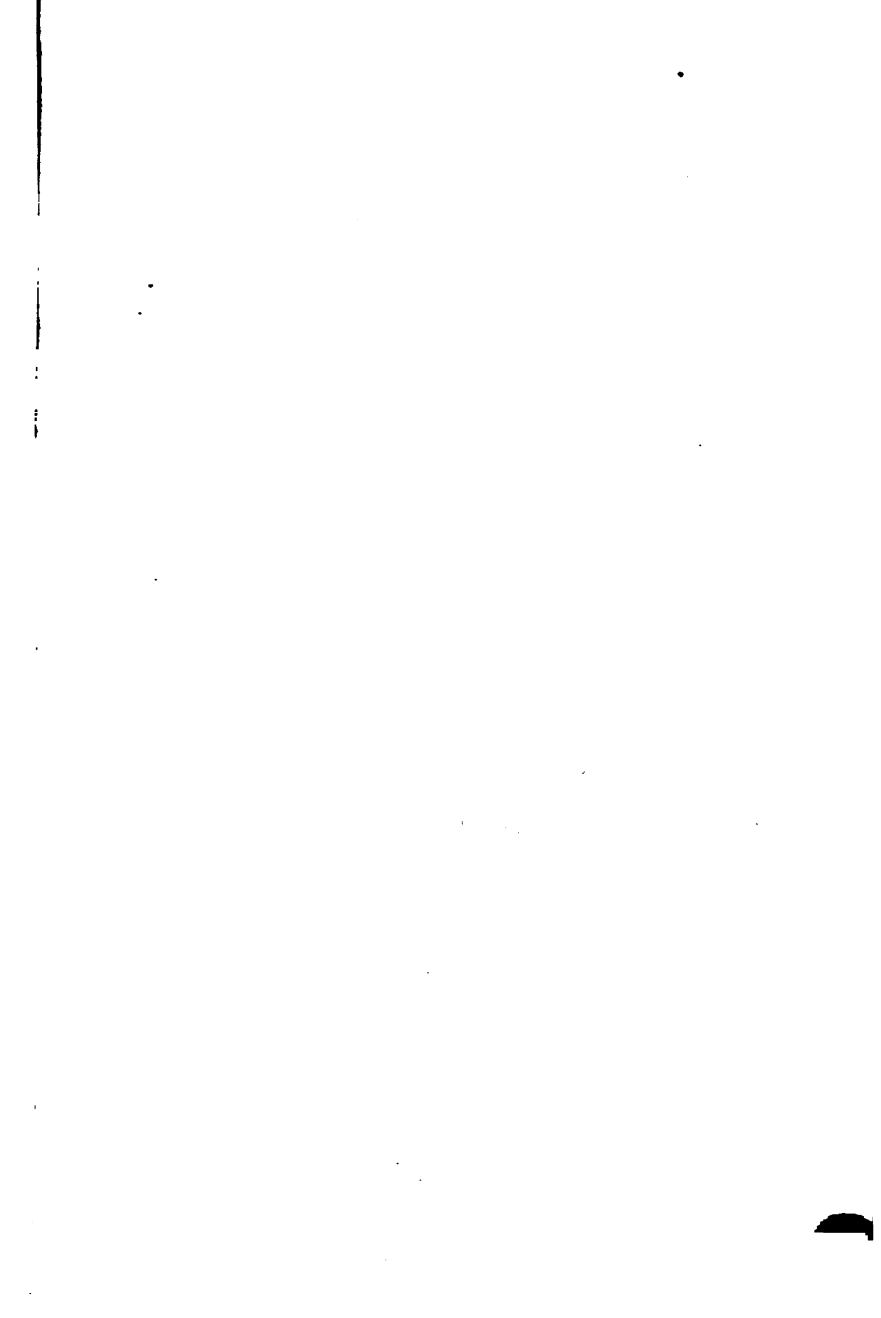




H. G. Pen

Van M^o







THE LAST DAYS OF JESUS

Mathematics 2021, 9, 176

[illegible]

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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THE

LAST DAYS OF JESUS,

AND OTHER POEMS.

“ Forgive the song, that falls so low
Beneath the gratitude I owe ;
It means Thy praise,—however poor,
An angel’s song can do no more.”

BY SOPHIA LOUISA LITTLE.

SECOND EDITION.

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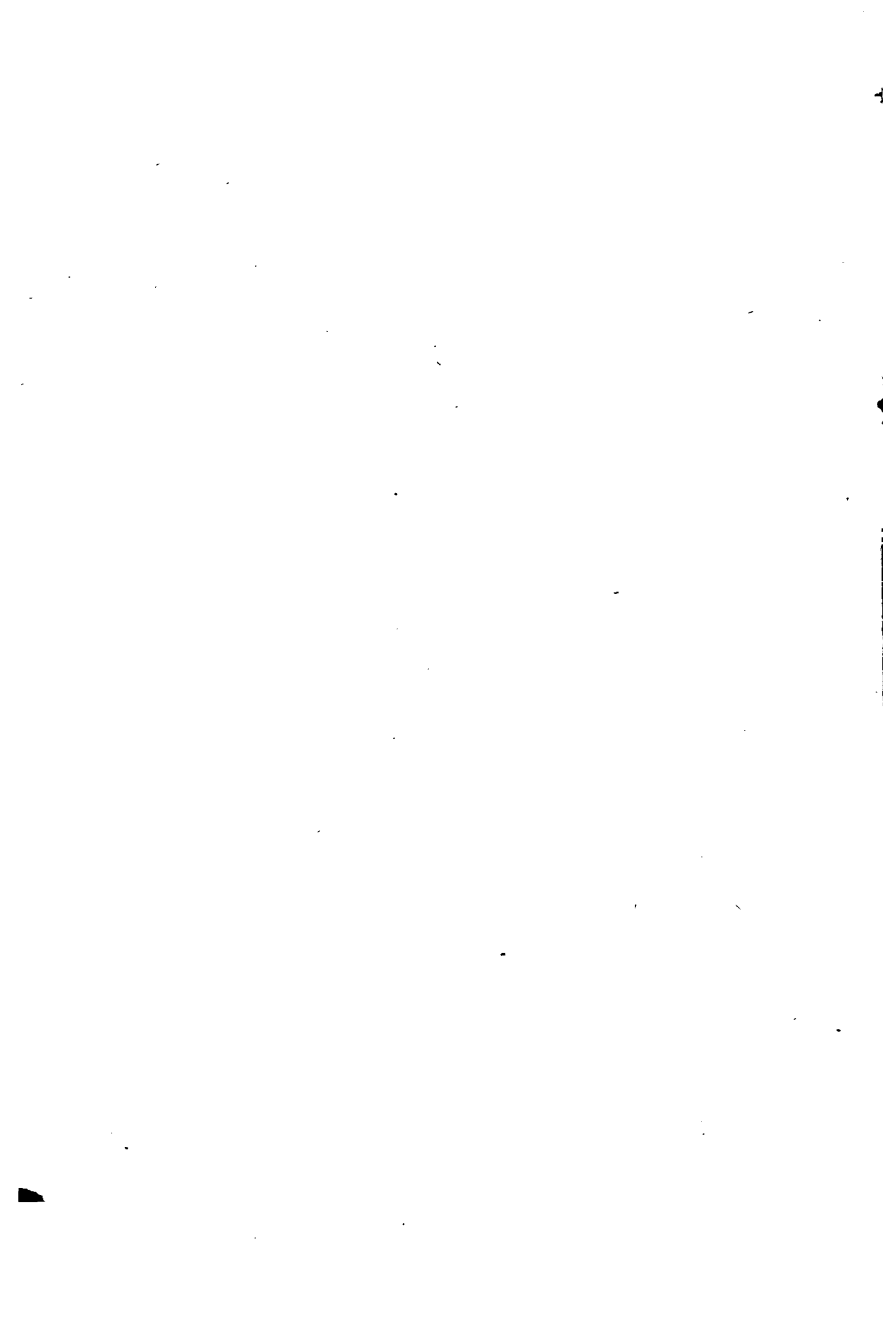
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TO
MRS. FRANCES JONES VINTON,
AS A TRUE DISCIPLE OF HER CRUCIFIED LORD,
BOTH IN WORD AND DEED,

The Last Days of Jesus

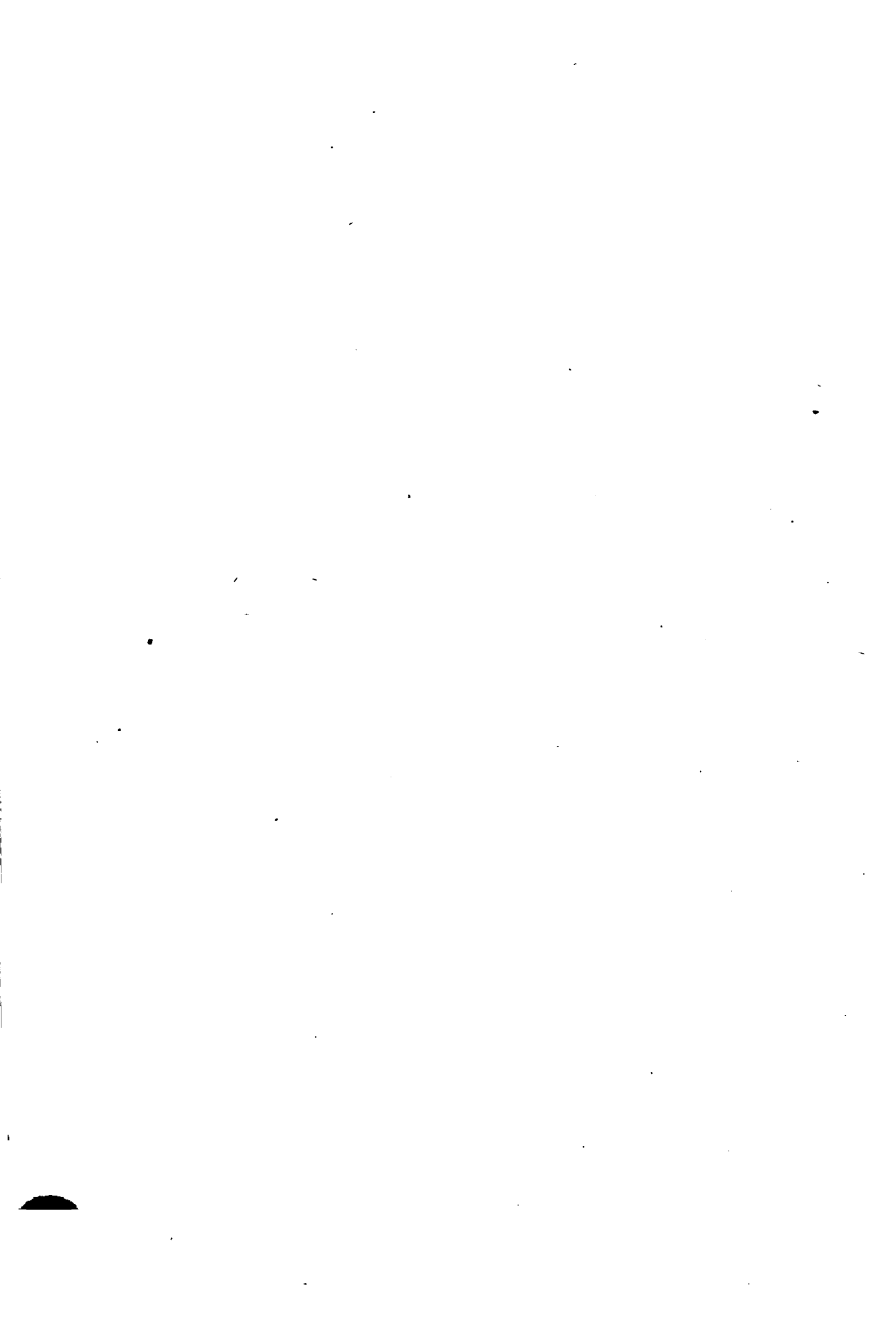
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BY THE AUTHOR.



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I.
THE ADVENT.

CANTO I.

I.

THE summer sun has left a bright farewell—
But growing shadows hang o'er yonder steep ;
A gentle stillness seems around to dwell,
Soft and ambrosial as an infant's sleep.
Yet, brooding o'er the whole, a spirit deep,
As if the air had thought. Yon river clear,
And those blue skies, a quiet sabbath keep :—
Surely some pitying seraph hovers near,
For love, pure, peaceful, tender love is here.

II.

But there is One alone—and, kneeling there,
Amidst the kindred stillness of the place ;
The voice, the youthful voice is poured in prayer,
And light and tears are mingling in her face,
The broken spirit, and the answering grace,—
The hidden sweetness, and the spirit's love,
O'er that celestial countenance we trace,—
Pure, harmless, chaste, as an unfledged dove,
And inwardly absorbed in One above.

III.

Here was no earthly pride, no low desire ;
But love to God had filled the heart and soul :
The irradiations of that heavenly fire
Spread o'er her features, and illumed the whole.
If e'er her thoughts to earthly friendships stole,
Her pure affections knew no earthly stain ;
As, from their source, the limpid waters roll,
And, to their source within the watery main,
Return, as limpid and as pure again.

IV.

The spreading shade of the dark forest tree,
Thy temple is, thou simple, holy maid :
Here, now, thy melting heart is flowing free,—
No soul is near thee in this lonely glade,
But Him to whom thou hast so deeply prayed.
'Tis thy delight to tell thy Father all ;
Thy love, thy hopes, thy fears, are all displayed ;
In words, in sighs, in tears, that, trembling, fall ;
Thou dost upon thy God and Saviour call.

V.

Ah ! hadst thou not, even from thy earliest days,
Some intimations of divinity ?
Th' Almighty would, in His mysterious ways,
Fulfil his glorious purposes in thee ?
Wert thou not separate and set apart—
And was it not thy chief delight to be
Far from the scenes of splendor and of art,
Alone with Him—who filled thy yielded heart ?

VI.

Yet on this eve, this very eve, still more,
Did not a fuller, deeper blessing come ?
Did not thy soul thrill with prophetic awe,
Gazing upon thy high and heavenly home ?
Have not the years fulfilled their destined sum ?
Where is the hope that bless'd the prophet's eyes,
Long ere the oracles of God were dumb ?
Is it not time that, midst her darkest skies,
The promised Star of Israel should rise ?

VII.

How silent, all around thee, Nature seems—
As hushed and listening to thy voice so meek !
Is it the sun's farewell and lingering beams,
Bright as the smile upon a cherub's cheek,
Illumes the cloud o'er yonder mountain's peak ?
Or was e'er evening glory half so fair,
Or morn effulgent like the rays that streak
Yon stooping cloud—as if enshrouded there,
Some blessed spirit of the upper air ?

VIII.

Mary hath ceased her prayer ; and, seated now
In holy, happy musings, wrapt above ;
Her hand sustains her pure and tranquil brow,
And her full eyes are silent peace and love,—
Home of the sacred and celestial dove.
Happy each breath of that low, quiet heart,
Lovely, devoted, favored as thou art.

IX.

The cloud has left the hill : What sight is here ?

Down from the steepy rock it wings its way :

Lo ! as its opening folds of glory clear,

In floods of lucent brilliance melt away,

Appears an angel from the realms of day !

"Hail ! Mary : highest grace is shown to thee ;

On thee," he cries, "abides the spirit's ray ;

Blessed above all women shalt thou be !

Elect of God from all eternity !"

X.

O'er Mary's face a troubled meaning pass'd :

"From whence is this to me ?" she inly thought :

And in her lowly mind she meekly cast,

Why God with her so wondrously had wrought.

Her self-abasing look the angel caught,

And hastened all the message to unfold ;

But while he spake the sacred news he brought,

Th' exceeding joy that o'er thy spirit rolled,

Oh, blessed Mary ! never hath been told !

XI.

"Fear not, beloved of heaven, and favored one !

Behold ! an infant shall be born of thee ;

A virgin shall conceive and bear a son ;

JESUS his ever blessed name shall be.

Infant of days !—God of eternity !—

He shall be great—Son of the Highest styled !

And, by th' Almighty Father's high decree,

On David's throne,—so long in dust defiled,—

On David's throne shall reign thy wondrous child.

XII.

"Yea, o'er the house of Jacob shall He reign,
And endless ages hail His lasting throne!"
The angel ceased his gratulating strain.—
But Mary said, "Since I no man have known,
How shall this wondrous work in me be shown?"
To her thus answered the angelic friend,
While sweeter music thrilled in every tone :
"The Holy Spirit shall on thee descend,
The Godhead's power shall with thy nature blend.

XIII.

"Therefore that holy thing, that mystic birth,
Is called Jehovah's Son! And, for a sign
That God will do a mighty work on earth,
Elizabeth conceives by power divine ;
That aged saint of Aaron's priestly line.
Yea, soon the barren shall, rejoicing, bring
Her matron offering to the temple's shrine !
Let faith within thy joyful bosom spring ;
Unbounded power belongs to Israel's king !"

XIV.

To the unseen now Mary bowed her head.
"Behold," she cried, "the handmaid of the Lord :
Be it to me the same as thou hast said ;
The Lord fulfill His ever gracious word."
Her heart's assent the gladdening angel heard,
And stretched his starry pinions to the flight ;
Long strains of bliss the silent ether stirred ;
The silent ether shone with trails of light,
Till far th' archangel vanished from the sight.

* * * * *

XV.

Evening had lengthened now her shadows brown :
They gather round the mountains sadly still ;
And o'er the bustle of yon crowded town,
Whose ancient streets the various strangers fill.
But, resting there beneath yon arching hill,
Without the gate, a wedded pair I see ;
Their weary beast let loose to graze at will :
Poor seems their state ; yet faint as they may be,
None pause to yield them hospitality.

XVI.

The rich man passes with his costly train,
And many greetings make him welcome there ;
Around him come the idle and the vain ;
But who regards yon unobtrusive pair,—
Or gives one thought to heed how they may fare ?
Nor gold nor honor have they to allure,
And for the rest the world doth little care ;
It is enough they are unknown and poor,
Though their's the wealth that will for aye endure.

XVII.

The man, in ripened youth,—good, serious, meek ;
Younger the woman—and so pure a grace
Lives o'er that lovely brow and languid cheek,
That heaven itself seems opened in her face.
The journey's weariness we there might trace,
But nothing hurts the even calm within ;
Nor change of time, or circumstance, or place,
Could from its chosen rest her spirit win,
To mingle in the world's confused din.

XVIII.

“ Mary, thou’rt faint ! and I will leave thee here,
To seek in yonder inn a rest for thee. ”—
Thus Joseph spake ; and, from his partner dear,
Turned with a sigh her weariness to see,
And sought the inn. Beneath a spreading tree
The mansion rose : its doors were opened wide,
And thronged, with guests of every quality,
So full, that all access was now denied
To the poor traveller and his lowly bride.

XIX.

“ Hast thou no place ? ” he to the master said.
“ None, save the stable : thither thou mayst flee,
And, in the manger, find a rustic bed,—
The only lodging I can yield to thee. ”
This Joseph heard ; and, turning heavily,
He, the ungracious word to Mary brought.
Yet was her gentle heart from murmurings free ;
So deeply in the ways of patience taught,
It ruffled not her quietness of thought.

XX.

Meekly she rose, and left the dewy field ;
Light lingered yet along the crimson west ;
The evening moon lifted her golden shield,
Above the horizon e’er they went to rest,
While heavenly peace prevailed within each breast.
Though mean their bed, upon that manger floor—
The lordly couch by crowned Cæsar press’d,
Did no such band of guardian angels draw,
As hovered round that lowly bed of straw.

* * * * *

XXI.

There is a deep, a living stillness throws
Its spell o'er Nature : from the far, far sky,
That spreads in full magnificent repose,
To the least leaf that on the wave doth lie,
So beautiful beneath the Father's eye.
So, like a quiet infant in the arms
Of love maternal, even, without a sigh,
Doth Nature rest, amidst her blessed charms :
Gazing on her sweet face the inmost spirit calms.

XXII.

Whoe'er hath told, what language can convey
The loveliness, that soul in Nature feels,
To whom the Spirit's all transforming ray,
God, through the beauty of His works, reveals ?
How blessedly, through such communion, steals
The influence of an hour divine like this.
The peace of heaven the pardoned spirit heals ;
Scarce would the soul the earthly body miss,—
Lost in her own unutterable bliss.

XXIII.

The holy midnight hour doth round you reign,
Ye simple shepherds, who forget your sleep ;
And, met together on the grassy plain,
Watch, lest the wolf molest the helpless sheep.
Your pastoral avocations make more deep
Your unity with Nature ; and the chords
Of artless piety her hand will sweep,
Till all your harmonizing soul affords
Melodious praises to the Lord of Lords.

XXIV.

How many a night, upon this very plain,
Hath David, when a youthful shepherd, sung ;
Here once was seen that favored Hebrew swain,
Perhaps beneath some lonely palm tree flung,—
While all the night, the love of God he sung.
His look, so beautiful from inward light,
So pure the sweetness flowing from his tongue,
The messenger of heaven, in airy flight,
Might pause, and with the melody unite.

XXV.

They talk of him, and of the former years—
That group of shepherds, as they watch their sheep.
Such peaceful thought in every look appears ;
Such happy conference while the fold they keep,
Or such blest silence in their musings deep.
Behold them leaning now upon the crook ;
They meditate till they could almost weep—
So softening is the page on which they look ;
That lovely, midnight page of Nature's book.

XXVI.

Hark ! sudden music from those distant spheres !
What moving glory from yon starry height
Who in the dazzling effluence appears,
Before the amazed shepherds wondering sight ?
Awfully beautiful ! in God-like might,
Exceeding brightness sits upon his brow !
Yet love ineffable mellows that light :
But oh ! too much for mortal vision ! now,
See, faint with dread, the Syrian shepherds bow !

XXVII.

And yet that music melting, through the sky
The still empyrean stirs : How glows the air !
Behold the glorious angel draweth nigh ;
I marvel not ye scarce the sight can bear,
As on the plain, revealed before you there,
He stands all beautiful in God-like grace ;
The joy of paradise his features wear ;
All his bless'd message beaming from his face—
Peace, grace, and mercy to the human race.

XXVIII.

He spake ! exultant waved each starry wing—
And his mild eye diffused a gladdening ray !
“ Fear not ; for you, for all, good news I bring ;
Jesus, who takes His people's sins away,
The Saviour of the world, is born today
In David's town,—and this shall be the sign—
Wrapt in mean swaddling bands the babe shall lay,
Yea in a manger, rude and dark, recline,
In lowly loveliness, the babe divine. ”

XXIX.

Lo ! while he speaks, a sudden rushing sound
Of wings ! harmonious in their graceful flight ;
And lo ! the radiant shapes, appearing round,
A multitude, so countless and so bright,
The heavens seem all one field of living light.
Gaze ! gaze ! oh shepherds ! drink the glorious strains !
The song they pour, it hath a deep delight :
Ne'er heard again on earth, while time remains,
Is the sweet song they sing on Bethlehem's plains.

XXX.

Two-fold, the spirit of that heavenly song,—
The highest praise to heaven's benignant King
That even to Jehovah can belong,
Shall the redemption of the sinner bring.
His love, made manifest in suffering ;
His tenderness to fallen man made known ;
His condemnation of the guilt of sin ;
His intimate alliance with His own,
Shall wake immortal praises round the throne.

XXXI.

But Oh ! the other burthen of their lay—
" Peace on the earth, good will to sinful men ! "
Stay ! ye dear heralds of salvation, stay !
And let me hear those balmy words again :
Pour them upon my grateful heart, and then
Far let them float o'er all the earth and sea,
Till Nature's utmost voices cry, Amen :
The grace of God comes in those words to me,
And all the saved to all eternity.

XXXII.

What ! did I say that song should never more
On earth be sung ? Ah ! though no outward sound,
Such as through heaven these cherub voices pour,
No more shall charm the hallowed air around ;
Yet shall the spirit of that lay be found,
Where'er the heart hath known a Saviour's grace ;
Harmonious peace to glory shall abound ;
Nor yet the music of this happy place,
Can tell the bliss of love's redeemed race.

XXXIII.

The air hath caught the soul of that pure song,
And a meek stillness quiets every breeze ;
Ocean hath heard it where his billows throng,
And, like an infant, sleep the glassy seas.
Earth, too, in that sublime response agrees ;
Doth not her incense unto heaven ascend,
From all her flowers and all her fragrant trees ?
While wakening echoes the far hymn extend
And Heaven and Earth in full communion blend.

XXXIV.

And have they gone ! yes, the last note is o'er,
The last bright wing hath cleft the closing blue ;
They pause, as longing for that song once more,
Then, with an earnest joy, each other view.
“ Let us,” they cry, “ to Bethlehem pursue,
With glad and grateful hearts, our ready way ;
Our eyes shall prove the wondrous story true,
Our eyes shall hail the morning star, whose ray
Leads on the dawn of Israel’s promised day.”

XXXV.

Go, shepherds ; go ! it is to men like you,
Unknown and slighted of the Lords of earth,
Of childlike soul, to God and Nature true—
To such will He reveal the immortal birth.
Ye, in His eyes, are of a priceless worth ;
Your simple view no carnal wisdom blinds ;
Your artless faith may be the sceptics mirth :
Yet, who is truly wise, but he who finds
The light revealed to your believing minds ?

XXXVI.

I see an inn, amidst those mighty palms :
The fluttering torches long have ceas'd their glare ;
And sleep has fallen with her pleasing charms,
O'er many a worn and weary traveller there.
But where are they—that poor despised pair
Who in the stable sought their homely bed ?
Look, where those men with solemn haste repair
By the kind guidance of the angel led,—
They seek the strangers in yon lonely shed.

XXXVII.

Within, in that lowly manger, humbly lies
A mother and her babe, a new born one :
Late has He breathed of life the earliest cries ;
And nestles near her heart, her first born son.
Down her pale cheeks the tears of rapture run,
Her soul is filled with love no tongue can tell,
Her passion and her paradise begun.—
But words like these her thoughts may faintly tell,
If words could speak the indescribable.

XXXVIII.

“And art thou come ? Desire of nations ! thou !
Drainest Thou a feeble mother's mortal breast ?
Son of the Highest ! at Whose throne shall bow,
In other worlds, the millions of the blest !
Oh, mystery ! that ne'er can be exprest :
Yet, yet, within my heart I worship Thee ;
While, to that heart, in infant weakness prest,
Trembling, I own the Incarnate Deity :
God in the holy infant born of me.

XXXIX.

"Hail! to Thy dear, Thy sacrificial heart,
Come to be offered in atoning power:
What though a sword through my poor bosom dart?
Though e'en to Thee it be an awful hour?
Yet, from Thy suffering, man's salvation springs.
Hail! then: though clouds of wrath around Thee
lower:
Hail! crowned Lord of Lords and King of Kings!
Mighty in death, and strong through sufferings!

XL.

"For Thee all heaven keeps jubilee to-day;
And the wide earth is all at peace for Thee:
No battles rage, no sword hath leave to slay.
For yet, when Thou shalt rule from sea to sea,
Far from Thy sight shall war and carnage flee.
- The sword to plough-share turned in Thy mild reign;
Close ties of fellowship, and love most free,
Shall bind in one Thy own redeemed train,
And none shall rend that happy bond again.

XLI.

"For Thee, the very deserts shall rejoice
And blossom as the sweetly budding rose;
And at the sound of Thy harmonious voice,
The rugged rock shall crystal streams disclose.
Thy loved creation's full and wide repose,
No storms shall break; but Thy own halcyon wings
The spirit of a love no creature knows,
Shall dwell and brood o'er all created things,—
While some new form of bliss forever springs.

XLII.

"Thy saved creature, man, shall worship Thee,
Not as in darkness, but in union near ;
Thy bright perfections opening to his ken,
And that redeeming love—of all most dear—
That drew Thee from thy high and God-like sphere,
Shall bid him at Thy feet transported lie,
His friend, his Saviour and his God revere,—
Linked by each tender and each awful tie
To the bless'd souls for whom He came to die. "

XLIII.

Oh ! Mary ! such thy spirit's song would be :
But lo ! when entering to that humble shed,
The joyful shepherds bow the reverent knee,
And worship that fair child with holy dread :
Yea, tenderest love with thrilling awe is wed,
Bathing His sacred feet with many a tear ;
They bless their God who thus their footsteps led ;
They feel the perfect love that casts out fear ;
For lo, their own Immanuel is here !

XLIV.

There is a deep and holy light within
Those eyes, on which a mortal may not gaze ;
It is too clear for hearts not cleansed from sin,
To bear the pureness of its infant rays.
A prophet once beheld in olden days,
The terribly pure crystal spread above ;
But oh ! the light that infant look displays,
Would even the purity of angels prove,—
So radiant so intense its awful love.

XLV.

And were it not for goodness, written there,
And melting, never changing tenderness ;
That searching purity would wake despair,—
The trembling, awe-struck shepherds felt no less.
Yet did a sense of love upon them press,
Until, in confidence, all terrors flee ;
Then, then, with glowing hearts their God they
 bless,—
Or, in a heaven of silent ecstasy,
Infinite innocence ! they worship Thee.

XLVI.

Heavenly is the smile, that now repays
Thy earliest worshippers. Expression, there,
Thy touching infant helplessness displayed ;
And more of heaven than angels can declare,—
It is so gracious, and so purely fair.
Oh ! it is moving, e'en to watch Thy breath,
And think that Jesus breathes the vital air ;
And muse on all that inspiration saith,
Of Him who saves us from eternal death.

XLVII.

And must those tender hands be pierced and torn,
Which to Thy mother's heart in weakness cling ?
And must that lamb-like brow with many a thorn,
Be rent and mangled in Thy suffering ?
Those eyes, that seem of life the living spring,
Must they, in pangs unknown to mortals, roll ?
Yes, shepherds : that bless'd peace the angels sing
Comes through the travail of His offered soul,
When this great sacrifice shall make us whole !

XLVIII.

Then, glorifying God, they all returned ;
This swelling praise arose from every breast :
Joy, gratitude and love within them burned.
The pleasing image of the new-born guest,
Filled them with more than e'en their tongues
express ;
Centred the mind, and drew in its desires,
Till, lost in ecstasy supremely blest,
They feel the Saviour who their song inspires,
And the saints' hymn out-does the seraphs' lyres.
* * * * *

XLIX.

Queen of the glorious land ! what means, in thee,
Those clouded looks, that universal stir ?
Gathering in groups, thy general mass we see,—
Thy sages in their sacred haunts confer,—
Thy king sits restless on his royal throne—
And even at thy shrine, the worshipper
Hath o'er his face a look of sadness thrown :
What means this care, whence hath this trouble grown ?

L.

Look, where, beneath the evening's gentle fall,
Those travellers pass without the city gate ;
Arabian sages, whom they Magi call ;
Skilled in the future oracles of fate.
This morning, Herod, in his royal state,
Received, to audience, these eastern seers :
Their words, the court, the city agitate ;
And from the monarch, and the priests and peers,
A consternation every where appears.

LI.

For thus they spake,—these sages from afar,—
“Where is the infant, born for Judah’s sway?
Lo, in the east we hailed His natal star;
To Him we seek our earliest court to pay;
Speed us, ye Hebrews, on our happy way!
Long have we hoped for the expected sign,
Or some bright signal of the coming day;
Till, late in heaven, appears, with ray benign,
The ethereal token of the birth divine.”

LII.

Fear shook the tyrant’s cold and jealous heart;
And scribes and priests were soon in council drawn;
That they might to the royal ear impart,
Where the expected Saviour should be born.
In vain he veiled his fears in wonted scorn;
The ill-feigned semblance could not hide the fear,—
The bitter rankling of the secret thorn,—
As the pure oracle now made more clear,
Where the true king of Israel should appear.

LIII.

In Bethlehem is His nativity:
Thus did the inspired seers of Israel write:
“Thou, Bethlehem of Judah, shalt not be
Least of her cities in thy princely right;
For out of thee shall come in peerless might,
A Governor to rule my scattered fold,—
The day-star of their long and gloomy night.
Behold His goings forth have been of old,
While from eternity the ages rolled!”

LIV.

Then Herod called the strangers privily :

“To Bethlehem speed,” he cries, “with earnest
care ;

Seek for the child, and when the babe you see,
Back to the king with joyful haste repair,
For I would also go and worship there.”

Thither they move, obedient to the king ;

Their guileless hearts mistrust no evil snare ;
Nor see they where, beneath art's silken wing,
His murderous malice broods some evil thing.

LV.

Yet why should fair Jerusalem look dim ?

Should she be troubled at her Saviour's birth ?

Do not her future hopes all rest in Him,

To be the praise and glory of the earth ?

Art thou so steeped in sin and guilty mirth,
Thou tremblest at His footsteps drawing near ?

Promises are to thee of little worth ;

Guilt turns thy Saviour to a judge severe,—

'Tis perfect love that casts out slavish fear.

LVI.

Yet in thy walls there are a chosen few,

Who for the Hope of Israel humbly wait ;

These tremble not, but hidden from public view,

Observe the increasing signs with heart elate.

Nor know they only by prophetic date,

A Saviour near ; but lo ! their hearts expand ;

The Holy Ghost reveals, with glory great,

The time has come, Jehovah is at hand !

And, suddenly, shall in His temple stand !

LVII.

'Tis evening : and o'er temple, tower and town,
The frowning hill, and far extending wood,
The thought inspiring shade comes slowly down :
Yet, the long glowing twilight hath imbued
That mellow darkness ; so that even the dewed
And grassy plains are seen to shimmer bright ;
And pleasant 'tis to view, in tranquil mood,
The landscape, while the rich and lingering light,
Softens the near approach of solemn night.

LVIII.

Hail ! cooling gloom, and roll of waters, heard
Beneath the breezy palms and starry sky—
Hail ! the lone music of the evening bird,
Whom, while the woods echo her minstrelsy,
Yon fragrant thicket hides from every eye.
Our eastern travellers feel the balmy lull
Of Nature's spirit on their spirit lie ;
And, on their way in silence—but not dull—
Enjoy that hour so calmly beautiful.

LIX.

But see ; they beckon one another now,
And point with brightening looks to yonder Heaven ;
Then, to the ground, their heads in reverence bow ;
For lo ! high in the purpling blue of even,
The wondrous star to guide their way is given.
Luminous type ! no cloud of night shall be
Athwart thy radiant course one moment driven ;
Thy guiding glory flows serenely free,
Till they, the better Light of Bethlehem, see.

LX.

Oh, when they saw the star, they did rejoice;
Salvation's joy sprang up a living well;
And it was uttered in a praising voice
Of love and ecstasy unspeakable.
And might such words as mine, their feelings tell,
Here would I breathe their hearts' harmonious swell;
Their hallelujahs, while in bliss they swim,
Might thus be uttered in such thankful hymn :

LXI.

"Let God be praised! be praised for the unknown
— bliss;
For the glory has reached to our inmost souls,
As we gaze on that star in the blue abyss,—
The sweeter the blessing, the fuller it rolls.
Let God be praised! be praised, for Immanuel is
born!
We feel the Redeemer; we feel Him within,
As pure as the rays that yon Heaven adorn,—
So pure are our bosoms, all cleansed from sin.
Let God be praised! be praised! to His cradle we go;
The star goes before us to guide us along;
And when at His feet, more divinely shall flow
The rapture, the triumph, the praise of our song!"

LXII.

Thus happy they, till now the town they gain;
And lo! the star stands still. Ah! tell me where
Do they behold it? where yon palace vain,
Tells that the noble of the earth are there?
Nay: but o'er yonder stable, where a pair

Of humble travellers a shelter find ;
Thither the happy, weary men repair,—
So hath God cleared the vision of their mind,
It hurts them not, that thus their Lord they find.

LXIII.

There is a holier awe comes o'er the thought,
From that deep poverty that round Him lies ;
Something that sets the pride of life at nought ;
A majesty more perfect in our eyes.—
Wanting the baser pomp which worldlings prize.
Those homely rafters, that poor naked stall
Are meet to echo to His infant cries ;
Oh ! do they not, the more sublimely, call
Thy spirit worshippers ? great Lord of all !

LXIV.

There they behold Thee at Thy mother's breast,
With all Thy glorious weakness on Thee laid ;
The star, dissolved in light, hath found a rest,
In wreathing halos, round Thy head displayed.
Deep was the homage by the sages paid ;
Each gave their princely gifts meet for a king :
But, oh ! the heart by love obedient made,—
This is the better sacrifice they bring,—
This is the Saviour's chosen offering.

LXV.

At length, retired they sink to peaceful rest,
With purpose at the morning's earliest gleam,
Their course shall be to Herod's court address'd ;
But He who hath the heart pervading beam,
Warned them of treachery in a nightly dream—

Bidding them home return another way ;
For though most fair the tyrant's purpose seem,—
That Judas of the Saviour's infant day,
With guileful worship, would the Lord betray.

LXVI.

The baffled tyrant watched, and watched in vain :
Hell still was gathering round his raging breast ;
But when they came no more from Bethlehem's plain,
His murderous envy could not be repress.
Determined to destroy that infant blest,
His heart brought forth the dark, malignant plan :
None but a demon spirit could suggest
The blackest blot upon the name of man,
Since the sad history of the world began.

LXVII.

And Joseph slept ; but as he sweetly sleeps,
He starts, an angel's glorious form to see ;
“ Fear not,” a voice from the pure glory said,
“ I watch thy slumbers oft invisibly.
But wake ! arise this hour, and take with thee
The mother and the child ; no longer stay :
Far, far from Bethlehem into Egypt flee,
And be thou there until I call away,—
For Herod would the holy infant slay.”

LXVIII.

The noon beheld them at a fountain's side
Watering their weary camel : they had gone
A long, long journey since the morning tide,—
As by the wings of unseen angels borne.
Yet pensive seemed that infant, born to mourn,

And Mary's tears flow o'er her gentle son ;
Doubtless, her soul, with sad forebodings torn,
Presaged, too well, what Herod's hand had done,
And saw the streams of infant slaughter run.

LXIX.

In Bethlehem, when morning's early tinge
Touched the low dwelling, oh ! 'twas fair to see !
Where the thick mantling vines so richly fringe
The open door, running from tree to tree—
The early sports of smiling infancy—
Some older—but the younger, blossoming
From two years old and under, winneth me :
They are so bright, in their most joyous spring,
And, with such graceful love, around their mothers
cling.

LXX.

Hark, to the tramp of horses ! every door
Is thronged to see : 'tis an unwonted hour—
The armed bands within the village pour,—
The savage myrmidons of Herod's power,—
Alas ! alas ! for Bethlehem's infant flower.
So innocent, so unsuspecting too,
Upon the knee, or sporting in the bower,
Ye smile, as ye the shining sabres view,
And little dream they come to slaughter you.

LXXI.

Perhaps the mothers feel forebodings touch
Their yearning hearts, as in their fond caress,
They strain their babes with passion overmuch,—
Till gushing tears, as down their cheeks they press,

Bespeak the sudden and the strange distress.
For Oh ! a heart of right maternal mould,
Will often a prophetic power possess ;
And many things are, to her spirit, told,
Her infant's coming hours must yet unfold.

LXXII.

An infant stands by yonder basin clear ;
Too pleased, the pebbles in the wave to dash,
To hear the cruel horsemen drawing near,
To heed the dazzling sabre's sudden flash,—
Fearless, he turns, as his last pebbles plash ;
O'er him he sees the ruthless soldier stand—
Down comes the blow with sudden, fearful crash !
Once ! once he groans ! and waves his little hand !
His blood and brains are on that murderer's brand.

LXXIII.

The work has now begun ; the mothers wail,
Their unregarded and heart-broken cries ;
The dying infant's shrieks, these tell the tale,—
Nature's foul wrongs, and her deep agonies.
Where now the little hearts, that joyous beat,
All redolent of bliss, at morning's rise ?
Alas ! no other morning shall they greet,
They lie expiring at the murderers' feet !

LXXIV.

Think not, O selfish monarch ! that these groans,
To heaven's ear, shall unregarded come ;
For every pang each wretched mother owns—
For all these wounds so eloquently dumb—
Thy dark, thine awful guilt's o'er measured sum.

Lo! the avenging hour; for thee it speeds,
Red with the thunders of thy dreadful doom;
No more, for thee, the seraph Mercy pleads,—
Thou fillest up thy sanguinary deeds!

LXXV.

Mothers of Bethlehem! I can pity you,
Through visioned years, as gazing now I stand,
And the dark day of infant slaughter view:
Yet there are mothers in my own loved land,
Could more the bitter story understand.
Aye! for a deeper woe, than Herod's brand
Struck to the soul, they feel,—forever feel
There is a more inexorable hand,
To such an anguish doth those mothers seal,
As mocks the piercing of the tyrant's steel.

LXXVI.

Yet, think not, sweet maternity, thy ties,
Most blest of heaven, are rudely rent in vain;
There go to heaven from thee, such lonely cries,
As may not, must not often rise again.
My God will break for thee the oppressor's chain,
That breaks thy heart and chills thy holy bliss;
Thou shalt not bear, in sorrow and in pain,
To lose what pays for all,—thy infant's kiss,—
And its dear nestlings from thy bosom miss.

LXXVII.

In Bethlehem, when the dim sun declined,
There was the silence of a deep despair:
No cheerful stir, no voice of human kind
Save that, perhaps, some saintly mother's prayer

Arose to God, while weeping sadly there
O'er her dead child, kissing the marble face,—
Parting the stained gold ringlets of the hair :
She craves, in pity to her hopeless case,
The strong sustainings of Almighty grace.

LXXVIII.

"In Rama was a voice of weeping heard ;
Rachel, for her lost children, mourned and wept ;"
No comfort through her desolations stirred,
Where, on her plains, her murdered children slept.
Oh Thou ! who hast the seed of Israel kept,
Are not Thy tender mercies still in store ?
Why has the tempest o'er her valleys swept ?
Her lovely ones that bloomed so sweet before,
Behold ! they perish, and are seen no more !

LXXIX.

I heard a voice from heaven, and lo ! it said,
"Blest are the innocents who fell to-day ;
Unconscious martyrs ! who for Jesus bled !"
"Yea," saith the Holy Spirit, "blest are they :"
The sword could only the frail body slay ;
One woe, one pang was all the sufferers knew ;
Then, on the fiery chariot borne away,
They sing the Saviour's song forever new,
And His dear face with joy perpetual view.

LXXX.

Meantime, beyond the tyrant's useless rage
The holy infant dwells in Egypt's clime ;
Destined to suffer at a riper age,
No man may take Thee till the appointed time.

But lo ! dark Herod fills his years of crime.
Recalled to Palestine, the babe behold !

Led through new perils by a hand sublime,
Until in Nazareth see His youth unfold,
Even as the ancient mysteries foretold.

LXXXI.

There still may Mary's fountain clear be seen,
In that most sheltered valley, gleaming out ;
And, oh ! full oft Thy infant hours, I ween,
Were pass'd alone far from the ruder shout
Of Thy young peers, in that lone valley there ;
Even then, Thy Father's silent work about.
How sweet amidst that scenery, cool and fair,
From childhood's voice rose the Redeemer's prayer !

LXXXII.

And may I dare to think what visitings,
Deep in those lovely solitudes, were made ?
With what communings of celestial things
The heavenly bands their nightly visits paid ?
Oh ! was not oft their slow return delayed
Gazing upon the manifested One ?
The power, the wisdom, here in flesh displayed,—
Redemption's glorious mystery begun,—
The hallowed childhood of the eternal Son.

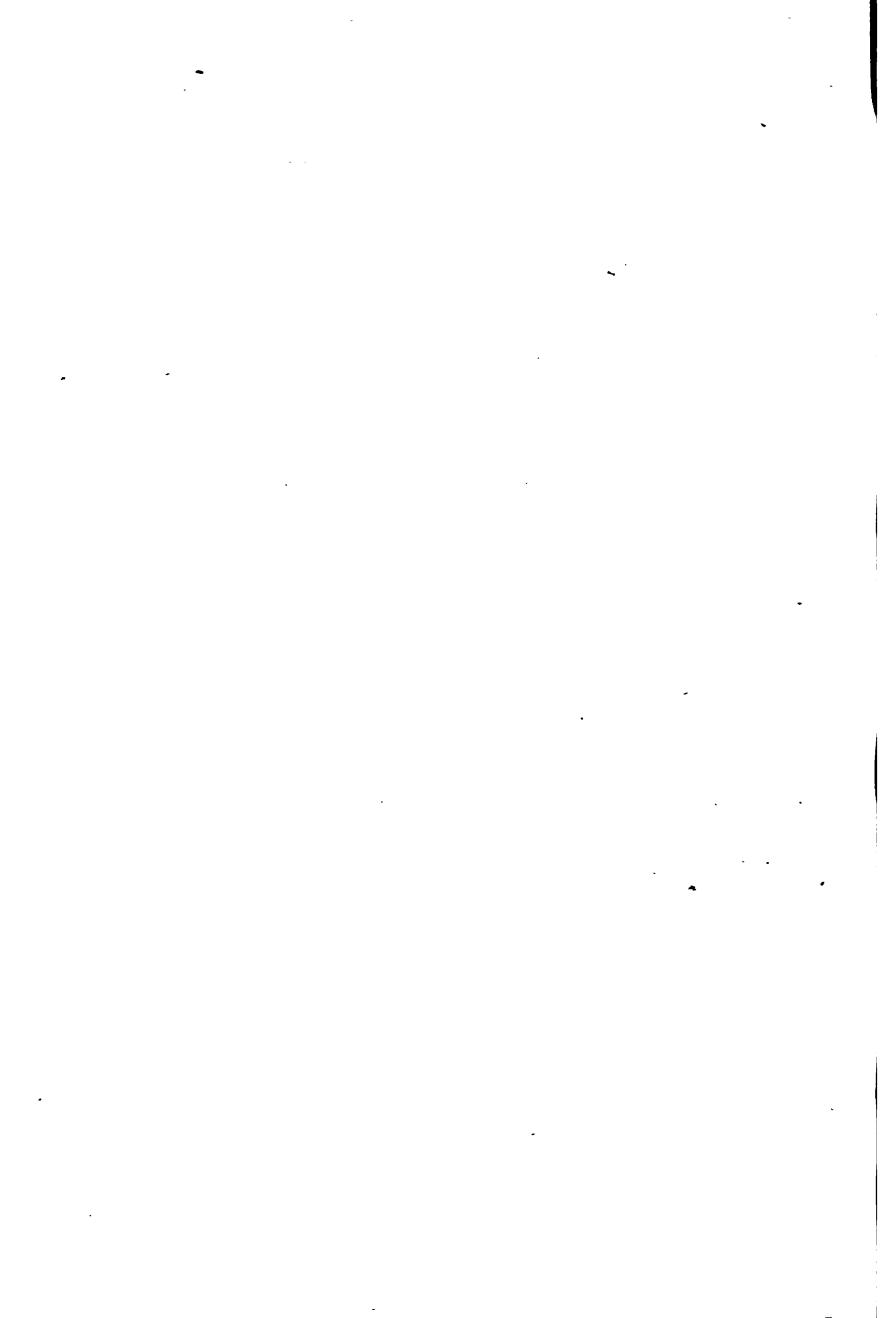
LXXXIII.

There Thou didst pass Thy boyhood ; there, for me,
Thy young heart learned to suffer and endure ;
There passed Thy youth,—a silent mystery ;
There grew Thy human nature, Nature's cure,

Amidst a world of sinners, meekly pure.
Unholy Nazareth ! all thy arts of sin
Could not His blessed purity allure :
A fountain of deep goodness dwelt within,—
The smiles of God, the hearts of men to win.

LXXXIV.

No more ! no more ! I close my humble strain,
Hymning my Saviour's birth. Oh ! may it be,
I have not touched the sacred lyre in vain !
Oh ! may some heart the Star of Bethlehem see,
And in the spirit come to worship Thee ;
And from Thy manger and Thy stable learn
The grandeur of divine humility !
Yea, round Thy infant temples, well discern
How clear the glories of the Godhead burn !



INTRODUCTION

[In the twenty-second Psalm the Messiah is compared to a hunted Hind. The metaphor is most powerfully illustrated in the 16th verse. The title of the Psalm is Aijeeth Shahur, The Hind of the Morning. As J is sounded I in Hebrew we substitute the I in our verse as smoother]

AIJELETH SHAHAR. (THE HIND OF THE MORNING.)

I.

O HIND of the morning, Aieleth Shahar !
O hunted ! O hated ! Aieleth Shahar !
Arouse the King Hound, at the dawn of the morning,
To hunt Him ; the fated Aieleth Shahar !

II.

How beauteous Thy feet are ! Aieleth Shahar !
By the lake, through the valley,—on Nazareth's hill.
But Thy cruel pursuers, Aieleth Shahar,
Through all the long day they are hunting Thee still.

III.

Thou hast scorned with Thy clear steps, and baffled
all day
The toils of Thy hunters, in deserts afar.
But now they are pressing down close on Thy way
And Thy hour is coming,—Aieleth Shahar.

IV.

Yet Thou turnest Thy face—and the gaze of Thine eyes
Is more than Thy murderous hunters can bear.
The Innocent Innermost glory that lies
Hidden deep in Thy look, O Aieleth Shahar !

V.

They gain on Thy steps, and Thy path they surround,
“The Dogs now encompass,” Aieleth Shahar.
In the dusk of the evening they pull to the ground
Their glorious victim, Aieleth Shahar.

II.
THE LAST DAYS OF JESUS.

CANTO II.

I.

THOU glorious evening ! is there not a charm,
A deep prophetic stillness inly blent
With all that glow, so beautiful, so warm,
Spread o'er Judea's living firmament ?
Judea, darling of the Almighty's eye,
O'er whose all-sacred loveliness was sent
His fruitful showers, His south winds gentle sigh,
And genial sunbeams with a golden shine,
Bathing the happy fields of favored Palestine.

II.

Yet solemnly and slow the sun goes down,
As if no more it should in gladness rise ;
Alas ! thy day of grace, dear land, has gone ;
Yet from the midnight darkness of thy skies,
A Light shall dawn, which, when yon blessed sun
Is quenched forever in a shoreless sea,
Coeval with eternity shall burn,—
Hope of a ruined world, the Star of Calvary !

III.

Who sits beside yon fountain of pure stone,
Swelling it with His tears' unheeded flow?
An outcast, whom His kindred fear to own :
A child of pain and poverty and woe,—
One held to be a carpenter's crazed son.—
Oh ! who among the great, would pause to know,—
Save, as an idle wonder, while they run
Their giddy course—the griefs of such an one ?

IV.

Slow gathering, one by one, a lowly band
Circle their humble leader : one, more near
Than all the rest, hath knelt to press the hand,
And, reverent, wipe away that burning tear.
“ Master,” he cries, “ we have the feast prepared,
And lo ! the hour has come, the evening's near ;
We wait Thy steps, Our Master and Our Lord.
Oh Thou ! whose happy presence maketh sweet,
And full of tender joy, each place where'er we meet.”

V.

The upper room, the spacious upper room,
Hung with the graceful garlands of the vine ;
The table spread, the offered lamb, whose doom,
Thou dear self-offered One, prefigured Thine.
Thou enterest with the twelve, with meek, slow pace :
Yet trouble clouds those lineaments benign ;
An inward strife hath flushed Thy gracious face—
Thy mystic travail, waxing mortal, now
Hath blanched Thy quivering lip, and darkened o'er
Thy brow.

VI.

It sharpens, to the crisis, this great war
Of Love—with sin contending unto death ;
While He, who willingly the conflict bore,
Who yet shall win the conquerer's palmy wreath,
Rose mid His brethren, and with faltering breath,
Checking His pain for those He loved so well,
He broke the bread, with often changing cheek :
Then, while His eyes beamed light ineffable,
These words of precious memory deigned to speak :

VII.

"This is My body, friends, broken for you :
Eat, my beloved ; all, the feast partake :
And oft as ye the loving rite renew,
Remember Him who suffered for your sake."
O dearest Lord ! Thy kind command should move
Our yielding hearts, with gratitude to Thee ;
So melting are those gracious words of love—
"As oft as ye do this, remember Me."

VIII.

And now, his hand, the mystic cup extends ;
Where, consecrate, the produce of the vine ;
"Tis the New Testament," He cries, "My friends ;
Receive My bleeding life, and life divine.
For you, for all, the tide immortal flows ;
Sin's full remission, glory's open door.
To all who seek, in Me, their soul's repose,
My love shall more than Eden's bliss restore,
And man, redeem'd, commune with God once more."

IX.

And what is this ! the supper, being done,
Behold ! He rises with a lamb-like grace,
And in His meekness, God's coequal Son,
Girt with a towel, takes a servant's place
Before His twelve poor followers, bending there,
Bathing their very feet, that all might see
The truth He thus would to all time declare,—
The soul of Christian love is sweet equality.

X.

“Lo ! an example I have given you ;
Nor is the servant greater than His Lord ;
If deeds of lowly fellowship ye do,
Ye little flock, most happy your reward.
I speak not of you all ; I know my choice,
Know all their love, sincerity and zeal ;
Yet, in fulfilment of prophetic voice,
He that doth eat with Me, against Me lifts his heel.”

XI.

He sighs in spirit ; oh that rending sigh !
The requiem of the lost ! No keener pang
Can thrill Thy soul, e'en when 'twixt earth and sky,
Thou like a doom'd, dark criminal shalt hang.
How from Thy lips, falls every fatal word :
“He that eats with Me, shall his Lord betray :”
How tremblingly the sad disciples heard ;
While every bosom sickened with dismay.

XII.

Now there was leaning on the Saviour's breast
One whom He loved ; whose child-like soul drew
near,

In the communion of a holy rest ;
Through all his toils and sufferings most dear ;
Whether by Galilee's blue sea they roved,
Or on the mount, or with the multitude ;
In every change still loving, still beloved ;
But most he joyed to share his Master's solitude.

XIII.

Through this dear follower, Cephas sought to find,
Which of their band should do the deed abhorred ;
He, on the Saviour's bosom still reclined,
Confidingly enquired, " Who is it Lord ?"
" To whom," said Jesus, " I this sop extend,
He is the man, who shall My life betray."
Oh better far for this perfidious friend,
Ne'er to have seen the blessed light of day,
Than thus for mammon's lure, to sell that life away.

XIV.

Here read ye nations ! as a lesson, read
This climax of all crime ; from whence it sprung ;
'Twas lust of gold betrayed the Lord to bleed ;
The lust of gold the wretched Judas hung.
O Avarice ! for thee love had no charm ;
And in thy cruel heart, it woke no thrill ;
And that sweet voice, that could the surges charm ;
It could not win thee from thy savage will,
Nor the wild demon storm of human passion still.

XV.

The sop was given to the traitor guest,—
That child of avarice, of hate and guile,
Who sought to veil the guilt his look express'd,

In the deceitful semblance of a smile.
And did he think that Being to beguile ?
Whose glance of pure rebuke and injured love,
Now bade his fearful heart within him quake,
And o'er his soul, a sick foreboding move,
Whild thus, in tones suppress'd, to him the Master
spake :

XVI.

"That which thou doest, do quickly : " at the word,—
Whose inward meaning he alone could tell,—
The very presence of his doomed Lord,
Became to him intolerable hell.
And forth he rushed into the open air ;
The gloomy shades of night around him fell ;
And had he breathed in words his burning care,
Thus would his gloomier soul its secret horrors tell :

XVII.

"That which thou doest, do quickly !"—dost Thou
know,
And yet so far beyond the fear of fate ?
It stings my rage to hasten on Thy woe,
Because Thou holdst Thyself above my hate.
I will be quick : the shining prize is near,
And Thou Thyself dost urge me to the goal :
I hasten to the deed ; away with fear,—
Although it be perdition to my soul.

XVIII.

"Oh ! that I had, beside his offered price,
The precious ointment Mary lately poured ;
The rest might take their fancied paradise ;

Leave me the pleasures of a golden hoard.
But yet He knows.—Who is He thus to know ?
And why this dark foreboding of my thought ?
Am I not sure despite His knowledge, now
He in our toils is most securely caught ?

XIX.

“True I have seen Him quell the mightiest storm ;
And the hushed waves laid trembling at His feet ;
An awful grandeur clothed His youthful form ;
While scarce a heart around Him dared to beat ;
But Scribes, and Priests, and Pharisees declare,
It is by sorcery these deeds are done ;
And He the doom of blasphemy should bear,
Because He made Himself Jehovah's Son.

XX.

“I would not have Him die : and if I thought
That they would slay Him, this I could not brave :
But yet the price my very soul hath bought ;
The silver, oh ! the silver I must have ;
The silver is my god ; I feel its power ;
I feel it like a spell upon me thrown ;
I have felt something hurrying to this hour,
E'er since I have the son of Joseph known.

XXI.

“'Twas in the hope Thou wouldst have been a king
I joined thy vagrant band ; but now I see ;—
And far away my idle dreams I fling :
Thou never didst, or canst rule over me ;
I would Thy visionary kingdom flee.

'Gainst all Thou art, all in me doth arise ;
Fire and the floods may sooner far agree,
Than Thou and I be bound in kindred ties.
Then let me haste, and win the glittering prize."

XXII.

A freer air that circle seemed to breathe :
Yet for a time in silent thought profound,
Their folded arms across their breasts they wreath,
And sit in musing meditation bound,
Till silence ceases, in this heavenly sound :
" Now I, the Son of Man, am glorified ;
And God himself is glorified in me.
For sin forgiven, for justice satisfied,
Glory immeasurable flows from Thee
Upon Thy Son,—Great source of Deity.

XXIII.

" My little children, soon no more you see
The face of Him, who is your bosoms' light.
Whither I go, ye cannot follow Me ;
Yet on your hearts, this new command I write
Let an o'erflowing love your souls unite ;
Stronger than death the inseparable tie ;
Strong as the love which drew your Lord below—
Which leads Him on to suffer and to die.
By this the world shall my disciples know,
If such pure flame within your bosoms glow."

XXIV.

Then Cephas thus : " Oh ! whither goest Thou ?"
To him, with tenderness, replied the Lord :

"Whither I go, thou canst not follow now,
But in thine hour shalt follow afterwa'd."
At this, the zealous soul of Cephas stirred ;
"Lord, why not now ?" he cried with fervency ;
"Since Thy dear cause my very life may claim."
"Wilt thou indeed " said Jesus "die for Me ?
Ere twice the cock shall morning's dawn proclaim,
Thrice shall thy lips deny thy Master's name."

* * * * *

XXV.

Thy priestly prayer, and that farewell discourse
That from Thy precious lips like music fell,—
Drawing their hearts with sweet, persuasive force,
I may not in my feeble numbers tell.
No ; let them in Thy simple gospel dwell,
Pure, full and gracious as they flowed from Thee.
The majesty of that mysterious prayer,—
The breathings of incarnate Deity,—
The word that healed thy poor disciples' care,
Remain a stream of life forever there.

XXVI.

Where the dark olives wave o'er yonder mount,
In the soft freshness of the evening breeze,—
And here and there o'er some low sparkling fount
The moon's pale light falls dimly through the trees.
In a still garden, on that fair ascent,
Fit place for peaceful talk, and musings high,
The Saviour and His friends full often spent,
The swiftly waning night, in happy colloquy.

XXVII.

That scene, endeared by many blissful hours,
Passed in communion of a perfect love ;
And a deep wisdom, whose seraphic powers
Ripened the spirit for its home above ;—
That hallowed spot where the Redeemer's lore,
So oft had fallen, like fructifying dew,
That lonely olive grove He seeks once more,
For thither a strong power His suffering spirit drew.

XXVIII.

"My soul is sorrowful, even unto death !
Tarry ye here, and watch awhile with Me."
Hear, O my soul ! what thy Redeemer saith,
Entering the shades of sad Gethsemane.—
Remember that this hour was borne for thee.
Alone, my Saviour, wast Thou ? Yes alone ;
The fiery shaft had to Thy bosom sped ;
No heart to echo, or to feel Thy groan ;
Far from Thy soul Thy Father's smile had fled,
And His deep thunders rolled above Thy head.

XXIX.

Mysterious rites, and ties of penal fire !
This night must wed thee to thy human bride ;
This night, when languishes heaven's sweetest lyre,
And the blest saints, their lovely splendors hide.
Come thou, for whom He lived and loved and died,—
Where'er thou art, in Greenland's polar snow,
Or where sad Afric rolls her golden tide ;
Come where these trees their solemn umbrage throw,
And muse with me awhile on thy Redeemer's woe.

XXX.

But a stone's throw from His belov'd He went,
For to their friendly sympathy He clung ;
But o'er their souls, with grief and travail spent,
As died the last faint murmurs of His tongue,
Sleep had her soft, oblivious mantle flung.
Alas ! while sinners sleep, must Jesus mourn !
Terrors unknown His suffering soul appall !
Till with the storm of anguish overborne,
Prostrate upon the cold, cold earth He falls,
And with strong cries and tears, upon His Father
calls.

XXXI.

" Father, all things are possible to Thee ;
Oh let this cup of sorrow pass aside ;
Yet not My will, but Thine be done in Me."—
And can the glorious suppliant be denied ?
Must deeper clouds the Face of glory hide ?
Wilt Thou not look upon Thy Son's distress ?
And must He fail ? shall fiends His spirit press
Forth from His clay ? Man's fate is in the beam ;
And fallen and weak He lies Who can alone redeem.

XXXII.

Who cleaves the darkness with a wing of light,
And on His wings bears some ambrosial charm ?
Before the sufferer He stays His flight,
And sheds invisibly refreshing balm.
And Jesus lifts His eyes in awful calm ;
Strengthen'd to live, to bear what yet remains.
But oh ! what sight to meet an angel's eyes !

The purple current of His purest veins
 Pressed through His pores, and stained, with crim-
 son dyes,
The hallowed ground where the Redeemer lies.

XXXIII.

For He had prayed, in agony profound,
 Until His fearful sweat was, as it were,
Great drops of blood, falling upon the ground
 Amidst the chillness of the evening air,
 Thy burning heart, my Lord, no chill was there.
Yet stronger than the tortures of this hour,
 Thy deep redeeming love within Thee glows ;
There, is the life, the overcoming power,
 Sustains Thee now, amidst such crushing woes,
 As none but God could bear, and none but Jesus
 knows.

XXXIV.

Saviour ! the loveliest name in earth or heaven,
 Where once an angel lingered let me pause ;
Thou hast in pitying grace my sins forgiven,
 And love to Thee my inward homage draws ;
 And silently my yielded heart adores
Her bleeding God ; and oh ! her love can see,
 In the prostration of this suffering night,
A brighter beam of true Divinity,
 Than when beneath Thy all creating might,
 Thy young creation smiled, and called Thee Lord of
 Light.

XXXV.

The agony, the mystic agony,
The purple sweat of tortures all unknown,—
The sorrow unto death endured for me,—
Be as a living spell around me thrown,
To make my heart more tenderly Thine own.
Thou glorious angel! who didst succor bring;
'Tis my Redeemer there in anguish pleads;
Go! tell the highest angel, that his King,
For me, a poor and trembling sinner bleeds,
And His redeeming love, their loveliest song exceeds.

XXXVI.

Twice in His trial, He had sought the three;
But slumber o'er their weary senses stole;
"What! could ye not watch one hour with me?"
Then did His love the mild reproof control;
"The spirit's willing, but the earthly mould
Is weak and failing. Yet My friends awake,
Temptation's darkest hour is near at hand."
Twice thus the warning voice of Jesus spake;
Now the third time He finds the sleeping band
Forgetful of their Master's kind command.

XXXVII.

I seem to see His look—their arms are cast
Each round his friend; as weary children sleep.
The gracious sadness of the evening past,
Hangs o'er each face as they had loved to weep;
The smitten Shepherd gazed upon His sheep;
"Why sleep ye? rise and pray," He, sorrowing, said;
"Lest sudden snares the unwary heart enfold;

He is at hand who doth his Lord betray,—
Tempted by Satan and the love of gold :
Yea, while I speak, his hastening form behold."

XXXVIII.

Yea, while He spoke, quick flashing through the trees,
The distant torches cast a trembling glare ;
Jesus the ruffian band advancing sees,
And the stern glancing of the arms they bear,—
And Judas, the accursed, among them there.
Firm with the little band he onward goes.—
When full in sight, "whom seek ye here?" He said.
"Jesus of Nazareth," exclaimed His foes.
His answer, "I am He," like arrows sped :
Backward they faintly reeled, and fell as dead.

XXXIX.

Oh ! glorious token of Thy majesty ;
Thy sov'reign liberty to die or reign ;
How sweet to think it was Thy purpose free,—
Thy royal will to be for sinners slain !
And can one heart untouched by this remain ?
My soul rejoices in Thy power thus shown—
A beam of glory from that final day,
When, midst Thy saints, upon Thy judgment throne,
Each knee shall bow to Thee, each tongue Thy sway
shall own.

XL.

Judas, with heartless treachery, had given
A sign by which they might his Master tell :
Oh ! blot his baseness out from under heaven ;

The shame of earth, the very scoff of hell ;
A treachery so soulless and so fell.
What ! the celestial kiss of love divine
Turned to the signal of a murderous crew ?
Well might the watching stars forbear to shine,
And sicken into dimness at the view,
When Judas rose from earth and near his Master
drew.

XLI.

For not the terrors of a scene like this,
The deadly impetus of crime could stay :
With the blasphemous mockery of a kiss,
He greets his Lord, and does His life betray.
But mark—what will the soul of meekness say :
“ Friend, wherefore art thou come ? betrayest thou
Thy Master with a kiss ? ” Oh may we learn,
In love and pity, o’er the worst to bow ;
Since Jesus, over Judas, seemed to yearn,
And fain would have perdition’s son return.

XLII.

Vainly, rude men, ye draw the cruel cord,
Lest your great victim should His bonds remove ;
A stronger power retains your captive Lord ;
The sweet constrainings of Almighty love.
Yet hear Him meekly thus your deeds reprove :
“ Come ye as for a thief with armed bands ?
When daily teaching in yon sacred fane,
Against Me then rose no assaulting hands.”
But ’tis the inevitable hour of pain ;
When evil men and fiends against Messiah reign.

XLIII.

"But let these go their way," He said, and threw
With calm but earnest love, His eyes around,—
As a fond sire would bid his sons adieu,
When on some distant, dangerous voyage bound,—
Though from His lips no words of blessing sound.
Did He not look a blessing? and those hearts,
That swell, as in a storm some mountain brook,
Feel the mild influence their Lord imparts,—
The stilling sweetness in His parting look;
Save one whose fiery soul with strong emotions
shook.

XLIV.

A glimmering dream, perchance, in Peter's mind,
That now Messiah's kingdom should be won;—
Or burning indignation thus to find
A lawless mob assault the annointed One;—
Whate'er it was, the deed was quickly done—
The sword was drawn, the avenging blow was given.
Had not that blow been partly turned aside,
By the direction of all-seeing Heaven,
Perchance the added guilt of homicide,
Had sunk the soul of him who thrice the Lord denied.

XLV.

Jesus put forth His hand, and kindly healed
His wounded enemy; Oh! lovely sight!
Which more the indwelling Deity revealed,
Than even Tabor's uncreated light.
"Put up thy sword,—the warrior's stern delight;—
For all who take the sword, the sword shall slay:
A hand unseen My soul through all can see,

The inward tortures and the outward fray ;
The cup My heavenly Father giveth Me,
Shall I not drink, and drink it willingly ?

XLVI.

“Thinkest thou I could not to My Father cry,
And shining myriads should My cause uphold ?
But how should then the voice of prophecy
Be all fulfilled, which to the seers of old
Messiah's mystic sufferings foretold ?”
He spoke, and willingly, was led away ;
His terrified disciples flee afar :
Thus from the hunted stag when brought to bay,
The herd disperse and leave the unequal war,
While on the bleeding deer the hounds their fury
pour.

* * * * *

XLVII.

Jerusalem ! unconscious of thy doom !
Thy fate is fixed, and numbered are thy hours :
How heavily this solemn midnight gloom
Hangs o'er thy stately palaces and towers !
Oh ! where are now the bright angelic powers
That had thee once in charge,—City of Peace ;
Where David's harp the coming Saviour sung ?
Now shall the voice of bard and prophet cease ;
A cup of bitterness for thee is wrung ;
A mantle of the grave is o'er thy glories flung.

XLVIII.

Who enters at thy gates ? Even He Who came
To gather thee, but thou wouldst not believe ;

Led like a criminal in grief and shame.

Oh! dost thou thus thy Heavenly King receive?

What eye, but lowly faith's could there perceive,
In that poor man,—so stricken and so pale,—

Whom the infuriate mob before them send,—

Him, whom the prophets as Messiah hail?

Of Whose dominion there shall be no end,

Till the wide universe before His sceptre bend.

XLIX.

There lingers one, far in the rear behind,

Of different aspect from that multitude;

And fear and love are struggling in his mind.

'Tis one of Jesus' followers by his mood,

Though he would plainly not as such be viewed.

See him a bold and careless look assume,

And onward move, as one among the crowd;

Till filled with light, amidst surrounding gloom

That overhung the city like a shroud,

Open and thronged, appears the priestly palace
proud.

L.

With yet more trembling heart he passes on;

But soon he meets, with joy, a well known friend;
The well beloved of heaven, the faithful John,

In whom true courage and true meekness blend—

The marble steps together they ascend.

John, being known, a ready entrance gains;

Then from the maiden portress, at the door,

He, for his friend, a like access obtains;

For lovely fellowship within his bosom reigns.

LI.

Not with the upper circle of the hall,
Who, round his fettered Lord, in council drew ;
Yet still, where he might clearly witness all,—
Below, among the priestly retinue.
So did his coward fear his faith subdue.
Him, standing thus, the portress of the door,
Now with a keen observance, closely eyed
His mien, his dress, the conscious air he wore ;
“Thou too art of his followers,” she cried.
But he of recreant heart, the unwelcome charge
denied.

LII.

And to relieve the pressure of his soul,
And shun their eyes, forth in the porch he went ;
And while dejected fears upon him roll,
Gazed, half unconscious, on the firmament.
Nor heeded he, on gloomy thoughts intent,
The earliest clarion note of that loud bird,
Who loves to hail the first approach of day.
Or if, indeed, that warning note was heard,
Idly upon his ear it passed away ;—
As restless toward the hall again he bent his way.

LIII.

Full was the council ; every look express'd
The breathless interest of that fearful scene :
There, the high priest, in sacred vestments dress'd,
A secret triumph in his haughty mien.
But oh ! how different, suffering, yet serene,
Before him stands the prisoner, closely bound.

The Prisoner ! oh tremble every heart !
The depth of love, that's in that blessed sound,
Might bid the secret soul of Nature start,
And in the cold, dark grave a gleam of life impart

LIV.

It seems but little more than thirty years
Have over Him in toil and travail sped ;
But what a history of pain and tears,
In that pale countenance, if rightly read,—
Of heavenly love to human sorrow wed.
He takes upon Him nature's misery ;
Her sickness, through His suffering, is cured,—
His perfect suffering even to Calvary's tree,
Where He must finish all in His last agony.

LV.

Then reverence, my heart, reverence that Man—
Wasted, and worn, and put to shame for thee ;
Let the cold caviler say whate'er he can,
This Man must be my bosom's Deity,—
Because He loved and gave Himself for me.
I can but worship, and my Saviour greet,
My Lord, my God ; and may I but remain,
Forever, Jesus, at Thy sacred feet.—
'Tis all the heaven my spirit seeks to gain ;
Nor greater blessedness can any soul obtain.

LVI.

The searching looks of the chief priests were thrown
Upon the Saviour, in their toils at last ;
And thoughts of all that they had seen and known

Awoke their passions, like a stormy blast.
The strong denunciations Jesus cast,
Through all His ministry, upon their pride ;
The Godlike power His miracles displayed,
Working against them like a mighty tide ;
The efforts for His capture, vainly made ;
These all before their minds were now at once
arrayed.

LVII.

These were their words, if they their feelings spake
“ Is this the illustrious prophet of Judea ?
What, He, who made the whole Sanhedrim shake ?
Where are His threat'nings now of woes severe
Upon our priesthood ? where the thunder sound
Of all His miracles ; whose spreading fame
Filled with a trembling awe the country round ?
Sunk in a cloud of ignominious shame,
Which, soon, in endless death, shall quench His
vaunted name.”

LVIII.

Then spake their head, and in the circle rose :
“ Declare, Oh ! Nazarene, Thy dangerous lore ;
And who the followers that Thy train compose.”
Jesus, (who, through the smooth disguise he wore
Of that dark soul the secret workings saw,)
Simply replied : “ I spake before you all ;
The open synagogue and temple sought :
Why ask of Me ? Upon the people call,
Who daily heard Me where the Jews resort ;
Behold they know the sacred truths I taught.”

LIX.

Scarce from His lips the guiltless answer ceased,
When spake a leader of the temple band :
“ Is this Thy answer to the ruling priest ? ”
He spoke, and raised his sacreligious hand,
And struck the brow of Him born to command
God’s endless empire ! Yet, with patient air—
“ If I have spoken evil,” answered He,
“ Do thou in words thy better witness bear ;
But if the truth, why hast thou smitten Me ? ”

LX.

Meanwhile, as Peter with the servants stood,
They cry—“ Behold a follower of His train ! ”
And he, by Satan inwardly dismayed,
With earnest vehemence, denied again.
Yet, lo, to prove his bold assertion vain,
“ Did I not see thee in the garden there ? ”
The kinsman, of the wounded Malchus, cried—
Stung, at the quick detection, to despair,
He, with a bitter oath of shame and pride,
The third, the fatal time, his blessed Lord denied.

LXI.

Immediately the cock for morning crew—
The simple teacher, whom his passion spurned ;
But what revulsions now his bosom knew ;
When at the sound, his Friend, his Master turned
Those eyes, that all his heart at once discern.
Their mild rebuke seemed more than words to say,
“ Simon, bethink thee of My prophecy,—
‘ Ere twice the cock foretell the coming day,

Thrice shall thy Saviour be denied by thee ;
Recall the warning words, the sad fulfillment see."

LXII.

Struck with the look, in keen remembrance woke
His boastful promise ; and his faithless tongue ;
His soul was pierced, his heart within him broke ;
Forth through the open portico he sprung ;
Upon the senseless earth, his body flung ;
And sobbed the fullness of his bursting soul.

"What have I done to Thee, my faithful Lord ?
Worse than the wretches who Thy fate control ;
Thy look, my God, it was a two-edged sword ;
It smote my spirit through, it thrilled at every chord.

LXIII.

"Why didst Thou, from the shores of Galilee,
In gracious meekness, call me to Thy side ?
Why did I e'er on heavenly Tabor see,
That lovely vision,—Jesus glorified ?
Since I have Thee forsaken, Thee denied.
I saw the thronging sorrows on Thee press ;
Before Thy foes a fettered captive driven ;
Yet I forsook Thee, in Thy deep distress,
And then disown'd Thee. Is there mercy, heaven ?
And may so false a heart e'er hope to be forgiven ?"

LXIV.

But turn we to the Prisoner, still the same ;
While to condemn the innocent, they sought ;
A fruitless toil ; they found no cause of blame,—
Till, at the last, two witnesses they brought ;
Yet these agree not in their vain report—

"He cried," they said, "If yonder glorious shrine,
A wreck, a ruin, at My feet should lie,
Without the work of hands, by power divine.
Again its lofty towers should soar on high,
Ere thrice the rising sun had purpled o'er the sky."

LXV.

But dumb with silence, Jesus calmly heard
All that their potent malice could suggest ;
And His mild bearing more their anger stirred ;
Till the high priest, in Aaron's lineal vest,
Imperious thus his Prisoner address'd—
"Answerest Thou nothing ? Deignst Thou no reply ?
Then I adjure Thee by the holy One,
Even by the blessed Majesty on high ;"
(Who could the solemn adjuration shun,)
"Art Thou the anointed Christ, the great Jehovah's
Son ?"

LXVI.

Oh for the look, that, with these words, was given ;
"I am ! and lo ! hereafter ye shall see
The Son of Man come in the clouds of heaven,
In full dominion, and great majesty ;
And on His Father's throne, His seat shall be."
Rage struck His enemies—the priest arose,
Rending his robes ; "He speaketh blasphemy ;
Ye hear what blasphemies His lips disclose ;
What further need of witnesses have we ?
Say, Israel's fathers, what his doom shall be."

LXVII.

Then rose they all, and with united breath,
 (One, in the spirit of their envious hate,) Adjudged the holy Prisoner to death.
 So does the triumph their dark souls elate,
 They join the mob, to aggravate His fate.
They bind His eyes, and, then, with jeering cry :
 “ The Judge of Israel on the cheek they smite ; ”
“ Who smote Thee, then, Thou, Jesus ; prophesy ? ”
 Thus they oppress with mockery and spite,
 The Darling of the skies, the Father’s chief delight.

LXVIII.

The blows, that marred Thy face, the spittle rude,
 The unfeeling taunts, the pressure of their scorn,
The agony, that all Thy soul imbued,
 Oh ! Jesus ! oh ! my God ! for me were borne.
 For me, Thy heart did wait the coming morn,
Gathering itself to suffer ; may’st Thou yet
 See that Thy sufferings were not in vain ;
Thou, whose dear locks upon Thy head are wet
 With dews of anguish, like a summer rain :
 Oh ! may we love Thee well, who caused Thy travail
 pain.

LXIX.

Wane swiftly, heavy night ; oh ! wane away ;
 I fain would have the hour of suffering o’er ;
My sorrowing muse dreads, and yet loves the day ;
 Was sorrow e’er so wed to joy before ?
Jesus, in spirit, let me go with Thee,
 Through every precious, every trying scene ;

From Gethsemane's grove, to Calvary ;
 Where the full glory of my Lord is seen,—
 And where I fain would dwell, with not a cloud
 between.

* * * * *

LXX.

Sweet Palestine ! now o'er thy palmy hills,
 Rise the glad matins of the early morn ;
 Soft melody the waving forest fills ;
 And, from the valley, sounds the shepherd's horn ;—
 And far away the enlivening song is borne,
 Through the dark thicket and the winding glade ;
 And oft the grateful chaunt of early day
 Will the still solitary glen invade,
 Where some lone hermit takes his happy way,
 Afar from all the world to meditate and pray.

LXXI.

Ah ! who could gaze upon thy scenes so fair,
 And feel the appeal of nature reach his heart,
 And think a crime, a curse was hovering there,
 And all thy loveliness must soon depart ?
 Yet turn we to yon city's open mart ;
 Her ample gates this moment they unfold,
 Her temple brightens in the rising sun ;
 That sun must, ere his going down, behold
 A mighty battle fought and lost and won,
 Between the hosts of hell and Christ, the anointed
 One.

LXXII.

Hark to the shout ! it comes from yonder throng ;
 There is the priest, the lawless mob to guide

In this their hour of triumph, leading on
The foe of spiritual and earthly pride.
His face is bruised with many a cruel blow ;
His face that wears a heavy trace of tears ;
To heathen Pilate's judgment seat He goes ;
Yet, midst their mockery and insulting jeers,
Before His shearers dumb, the patient Lamb appears.

LXXIII.

And they have passed—but who is this, who now
Steals from the house of Caiaphas alone ?
Horror and hell are written on his brow ;
And deep despair is in his inward groan ;
“Is he condemned ?” he cries in shuddering tone ;
“And will they on the cross of torture stretch
My kindly Master, whom I sold to die ?”
Oh cruel traitor ! oh perfidious wretch !
Yet fly, though hell pursues thy footsteps, fly ;
Give back the accursed bribe—the price of treachery.

LXXIV.

He meets the priests ; “Oh ! I have sinned,” he cries ;
“I have betrayed the innocent to bleed ;
Take back your bribe ; 'tis anguish to my eyes,—
The fair temptation to the fatal deed.”
Unhappy Judas ! what can now exceed
Thy utter misery ? when, with scornful look,
“What is thy penitence to us ?” they say ;
Then the last hope his wretched soul forsook ;
No more could he endure, no longer stay,
But dashed the silver down, and trembling, fled
away.

LXXV.

Lone was the field the fall'n apostle sought ;
Fearfully desolate : he gazed around ;
His sobs had ceased in one determined thought :
From his set lips there came no human sound.
He raised himself, and then with one wild bound
Headlong he fell, and dyed his parent earth
With the death crimson of his bursting veins.
Far better never to have seen the birth ;
His soul departs in strange unearthly pains,
And weltering on the ground, his blackened corpse
remains.

* * * * *

LXXVI.

Where rose his palace, midst its columns tall,
Pilate comes forth before his Jewish train,
Who could not enter then a Gentile hall !
Oh ! vain adherence to traditions vain,
Where the true law could no admission gain.
Pilate looked coldly on the priestly clan,
And bade the leaders of the people move
In their arraignment of the captive Man ;
But what against their Prisoner can they prove,
But words of heavenly grace and miracles of love ?

LXXVII.

Yet now their groundless charge the elders bring :
"This Man has roused revolt among the Jews ;
Announced Himself as our anointed King,
Forbidding Cæsar's tributary dues."
Thus boldly, they the Holy One accuse.

Oh blackest calumny ! abhorred deceit !
'Gainst Him who would no earthly kingdom own ;
Who meekly laid His dues at Cæsar's feet,
And fled to deserts to avoid a crown.

LXXVIII.

Pilate, who, instantly, the motive saw
Why they in chains their glorious Captive led,
Answered them coldly ; " Have ye not a law ?
Go judge Him—ye who in that law were bred."
" We have no lawful power," the elders said,
" With death to punish this Offender's wrong."
Thus they resign Him to the Roman sway,
As He foretold them in prediction strong,
When, drawing near the city, on the way,
He solemnly announced the approaching day.

LXXIX.

Then Pilate entered to the hall again ;
And summoned Jesus. Slowly entered in,
Encumbered by the bondage of his chain,
The ever blessed Sacrifice for sin ;—
There still and free from the tumultuous din.
" And art Thou Israel's king, I ask of Thee ?"
Pilate enquired with look of lordly pride.
" Did other men report this thing of me,
Or comes it from thyself ?" the Lord replied ;
While His all searching glance the heart of Pilate
tried.

LXXX.

Then Pilate, with an added scorn, began ;
" 'Tis Thine own nation hath delivered Thee ;

What hast Thou done ?" Now from that outlawed Man
There came a token of that spirit free,
Above all bonds, above all misery ;
" My kingdom is not of this world," He cried ;
" Else would My servants arm, in My defence ;
Nor should I as thy prisoner abide ;
But now is My dominion not from hence."

LXXXI.

" Art Thou a king, then ?" in a tone subdued,
Pilate rejoined, with an increasing awe ;
That wrought his spirit to a milder mood ;
For well he knew no common man he saw.
There is within the soul a voice of grace ;
And had he yielded the obedience meet,
Even at this moment of the Lord's disgrace,
He would have fallen from the judgment seat,
And washed with tears his Saviour's fettered feet.

LXXXII.

" Thou sayest it," said Jesus ; and His eyes
Shone with the beauty of eternal truth.
As He had said : " Though in this low disguise,
And seemingly a poor deserted youth,
Yet thou hast truly spoken ; and in sooth
I am a King ; I am the King of kings ;
My throne is love ; My spirit and My word,
Beneath My feet bring all created things ;
Forth from My lips it goes a two edg'd sword,
Till the whole universe confess their rightful Lord

LXXXIII.

"To this end was I born ; yea, for this cause
I came into the world, that I might bear
A witness to the truth, and he will pause
And love to imbibe the doctrines I declare,
Who bears within his heart her image fair."
Saith Pilate "what is truth?" but did not stay
To hear the Saviour's answer. Gracious Lord!
When at Thy feet for needful light we pray,
Oh! may we wait with patience for Thy word;
And tenderly entreat till Thou the prayer hast heard.

LXXXIV.

Pilate, returning to the impatient crowd,
Now pressing to the entrance of the hall,
Waving his hand for silence, cried aloud :
"I, in your Captive, find no fault at all.
But there's a custom, at this festival,
I should a prisoner release to you
Whoe'er the voices of the people choose—
Shall I to Jesus then this mercy show ;
And, from these bonds unmerited, unloose
Him, whom ye call the monarch of the Jews?"

LXXXV.

Fierce rose the cry, "Barabbas, not this Man."
Barabbas was a robber, who, of late,
Committed murder, leading on a clan
Of wild insurgents, to annoy the state ;
Yet him the Jews in their exceeding hate,
Prefer to Christ, the blessed Prince of Peace ;
Yes, he must die ; the sinner free must go ;

Oh ! was it not a type of man's release ?
Freed from the prisons of eternal woe,
While Jesus takes our place and meets the avenging
blow.

LXXXVI.

Aloud, they cry, "Through Galilee is spread
The stir and power of this Pretender's name."
When, hearing of that country, Pilate said,
"Is Galilee the land from whence He came ?"
"He is a Galilean," they all exclaim.
"Go then," he cries, "where Herod holds his court ;
These things to Herod's kingly care pertain ;
To him yourselves and Prisoner report."
For over Galilee he could not reign,
Nor know the treasons of his own domain.

* * * * *

LXXXVII.

Beneath the cool pavilion's purple shroud,
See Herod seated mid his courtiers gay ;
Fanned from the breezy morning's balmy cloud,
And in the pomp of royalty's array ;
In full enjoyment of a festal day.
Beauty and grandeur gathering round his feet,
Diffuse o'er all his heart elation high ;
As in a courteous tone he deigns to greet,
With his proud spirit dancing in his eye,
The fair and martial forms, that to his throne draw
nigh.

LXXXVIII.

A different throng are at the gate below,
Attendant on a far, far different King ;
Soon as their urgent embassy they show,
The hall of audience, they open fling,
And Jesus to the kingly presence bring.
Jesus, who in the eye of heaven, appears
More excellent in His extreme disgrace,
Through clouds of dust, and misery and tears,
Than Herod, who, in pride of power and place,
Upon the Prisoner gazed, with stern enquiring face.

LXXXIX.

For of the youthful Prophet he had heard ;
How life and death were subject to His will ;
And the wild elements obeyed His word,
At His commanding mandate ; " Peace be still."
But now, though deeply bowed with every ill,
Herod, in vain, that mighty mind would test ;
No word His calm and silent lip replied ;
No miracle a hand divine express'd ;
And He, who ne'er a beggar's suit denied,
Refused a show of power to kingly pride.

XC.

With many a scoff, the disappointed lords,
Taunt the unhappy, smitten from above ;
Yet in the midst of their oppressive words,
His tender heart could weep large tears of love,
And all His soul, in yearning softness move.
While in mock royal robes, as well designed
To show derision of His dignity,

Herod to Pilate's power again consigned,
The unresisting Saviour of mankind.

XCI.

Having convened the Jews, then Pilate spake :

“Ye, to my bar, the Prisoner have brought,
As one who sought the general peace to break,

By the seditious heresies He taught ;

Yet, having proved Him on your own report,
In the accused I find no cause of blame.—

To Herod's court I sent the Prisoner, bound ;
And hence, without one badge of guilt, He came ;

We for your charges see no certain ground ;

No rightful cause of death is in your Captive found.”

XCII.

Lo, where a messenger appears in haste,

Through the dense crowd there goes a sudden stir ;
A letter in the judge's hand is placed ;

What can it be, at such an hour from her

The noble lady of the governor ?

And thus the memorable message ran :

(So through a storm a cherub takes its flight :) .

“ Oh ! have thou nought to do with that just Man ;

Because of Him, on this momentous night,

Around my restless couch did awful visions light.”

XCIII.

Was it a dream of Calvary came to thee,

That o'er thy sleep such fearful darkness flung ?

Didst thou between the earth and heaven, see

A pale and ghastly form by torments wrung ?

Was not thy conscience by the vision stung,—

As if thyself had doomed Him there to die ?
And was it not revealed with power within,
The tortured form, that filled thy spirit's eye,
And seemed the fullness of thy heart to win,
Was the great offering for human sin ?

XCIV.

As o'er and o'er the solemn words he read,
New thoughts of fear in Pilate's bosom spring ;
And thus to the assembled crowd, he said :
" Shall I release Barabbas, or your King ?"
Now did the air with shouts repeated ring
From that wild mass, most like a foaming sea ;
(For the chief priests stirred that tumultuous tide,)
" No, not this Man, Barabbas we will free."
" What do I then with Jesus ?" Pilate cried.
Uprose a sterner shout, " Let Him be crucified."

XCV.

" Why," he exclaimed, " What evil hath He done ?"
The louder yet the roar of voices rose
Against the anointed and the holy One ;
" Let Him be crucified." Insatiate foes !
This painful death your heartless malice shows ;
How could you look upon that sorrowing face,
And colder than the ice-bound rocks remain ?
How could you doom the heart all truth and grace,
To break beneath the racking power of pain ?
And wast Thou, Lord, for these Thy murderers slain ?

XCVI.

Then Pilate yields to their unjust demands ;
And forth before the multitude he stood ;

And while he in the basin, laves his hands,
He cried : " I wash me from this guiltless blood ;
See ye to it." Then, as a raging flood,
Swollen by a whirlwind, lifts its voice on high,
They cried aloud, in their enfrenzied zeal,
" His blood on us and on our children lie."
With fearful imprecations, thus they seal
The doom, which yet their banished children feel.

XCVII.

And has the moment come, and will they dare
To mangle that pure temple of Thy frame ?
Yes, they have bound Thee to the pillar there,
And who, Oh, Saviour ! can Thy sufferings name,—
As they prepare to do their work of shame ?
Come, Roman lictors, come, the soldiers call,
Cruel and merciless your stripes may be ;
Know that my Saviour will endure them all,
In the deep patience of His love for me ;—
But what, oh gracious Friend, shall I return to Thee ?

XCVIII.

Another, and another ; Oh my God !
Their heavy stripes have entered to Thy soul ;
And fast and free upon the ensanguined sod,
The crimson torrents of salvation roll.
Most blessed Jesus, thus Thou mak'st us whole.
Oh ! by Thy cup of sorrow running o'er,
May all my grateful thoughts in homage move ;
Love is the Deity I must adore ;
Love is the Deity adored above ;
And dearest Lord Thou art incarnate love !

XCIX.

Unbind your victim, faint and dyed with gore,
Given in your hands, ye soldiers ; mock His woe,
And o'er His reeking wounds with anguish sore,
With fiendish glee, the faded purple throw,—
The mimic sceptre in His hand bestow ;
Plait the sharp crown of regal mockery,
And press it closely on His bleeding brow ;
Salute Him king, and then the suppliant knee,
In keen derision of His weakness, bow,—
He bears it all in silent meekness now.

C.

Yet comes an hour, when ye again shall bend
Before the Man to whom ye kneel in scorn :
Sign of a kingdom that shall know no end
Is that slight reed His trembling hands have borne ;
The hiding of His power is in each thorn
Ye fiercely round His aching temples fold ;
There dwells more glory in that blood stained dress,
Than the far spreading universe can hold ;
And in that face, disfigured with distress,
The spirit of eternal loveliness.

CL.

With some faint hope to move the general mind,
Pilate addressed the crowd around the door :
“That ye may know no cause of blame I find,
Lo ! I present your Prisoner once more :
Behold the Man !” The gazing people saw
A stricken, bleeding form, with mockery's wreath
Around His head, all recent from the scourge ;

Yet hatred is not quenched.—Still for His death,
Moved by the priests, the bellowing people urge—
So hollow winds arouse the wild, relentless surge.

CII.

“Take Him yourself.” (thus Pilate answered them,)
“With your own hands your Victim crucify;
I see no cause the Prisoner to condemn.”
Incensed, the leaders of the Jews reply:
“We have a law; by that He ought to die,
Because the Son of God Himself He made.”
At these dread words did Pilate’s spirit bow,—
To touch that sacred life the more afraid,—
Back to thê hall he turned with solemn brow
And trembling heart, enquiring “Whence art Thou?”

CIII.

But Jesus answered not; with wondering pride
Then Pilate said: “What speak’st Thou not to me?
I, in my power Thy death or life decide.”
Jesus replied with innate majesty;
“No power at all has Pilate over Me,
Save by the grant of overruling heaven;
And hence a greater evil he has wrought,
Who, to the Gentile sway, My life has given.”
At these calm words with truth and wisdom fraught,
Pilate for His release more earnestly besought.

CIV.

But now their last, their boldest plea they bring:
“Releasing Him, thou art not Cæsar’s friend;
For whosoever makes himself a king,

Does treason to th' imperial crown intend."
These words the nobler thoughts of Pilate end ;
Conscience, to interest, that moment yields.
Now comes the consummation of their deeds ;
This vine of earth, hangs ripe in Judah's field :
The harvest of God's righteousness succeeds ;
And mercy triumphs even when Jesus bleeds.

CV.

In robes of state to strike a solemn dread,
Pilate appears upon the judgment seat ;
Before him stands the Judge of quick and dead ;
The hour is come, the crisis is complete,—
He must the sentence of a mortal meet.
"Behold your King !" he spake ; a murderous cry
Rose to the heavens, yea to the heavenly throne ;
"And must I then your monarch crucify ?"
Indignant shouts again the Lord disown ;
"Cæsar shall be our king, Cæsar alone."

CVI.

The sentence has gone forth ; and He has gone
To suffer death ; and Pilate has retired,—
They lead Him on, (His heart with sorrow torn,)
With all the fury which their hate inspired.
Filled were the streets where'er the sound transpired
Of the great Prophet to the torture led ;
And there were those whose sickness He had healed ;
Those He had wakened from the silent dead ;
And some disciples whom His love had sealed,
Unto the glory yet to be revealed.

CVII.

He goes to Calvary. Through yonder gate ;
The altar of our sacrifice is borne ;
Stooping His bleeding back beneath its weight.
See where He slowly moves,—the rabble's scorn.
It is the fervor and the height of morn ;
And the dark sweat, drops from His brows like rain.
He faints, He sinks, who is of power the source—
And lo a stranger must the load sustain,
Whom the impatient Jews compel, by force,
To bear to Calvary the burthen of His cross.

CVIII.

Out broke the bitter and the loud lament
The presence of the priests could ne'er restrain ;
For as with that great multitude they went,
The heart of woman could no more contain,
And wept aloud, and sobbed and wept again.
But Jesus turned, and with a sorrowing air,
Gazed on these mourners of His scattered sheep ;
“Ye daughters of Jerusalem ! forbear :
Your flowing tears for your own anguish keep ;
Weep for yourselves and for your children weep ;

CIX.

“For lo, the coming days ! when they shall say,
Bless'd are the barren who did never bear,
And she who never nourished infancy ;
Changed to a heavy curse, that pleasing care.
Then to the rocks and hills in their despair,
‘Fall on us, cover us,’ these men shall say ;
For if these things are done in the green tree,—

If thus I suffer, sin to take away—

What shall the doom of those dead branches be
Whose withering unbelief rejected Me?"

* * * * *

CX.

Oh! Calvary! thou solitary hill;

Place of the doomed and unseparated dead;
The very sun upon thy brow is chill;
Thou seem'st to gloom and endless silence wed.
Yet on thy bosom, shall this day be shed,
Such blood as shall forever hallow thee;
In all the universe shall be no ground
So sacred to the soul as Calvary.
Angels shall on thy summit oft be found,
And in thy ev'ning air their melodies abound.

CXI.

Who are the multitude, that now invade
Thy death-like stillness? up the hill they press;
Three men, like criminals, in front displayed;
He in the midst whose very looks express
The majesty of virtue in distress.
Yea! never earth so pure a victim saw;
What heavenly goodness! yet what pain is here;
Look up my soul, look on Him and adore;
There is no trace of guilt, no touch of fear;
The perfect work, of perfect love reverse.

CXII.

Now on the altar of the cross they bind
The holy and atoning Sacrifice:

And while the priests glut their revengeful minds,
As prostrate bound upon the cross He lies,
Tears of keen misery fill His closing eyes.
Through Thy extended hands, the nails they drive;
Ah! the keen spasms thrill Thy faithful breast!
Then through those feet, all tremblingly alive,
With cruel strength the torturing nails are press'd—
And Thy low groans the fearful shock attest.

CXIII.

They lift His cross; the blood of ransom flows;
With such a thrust 'tis driven within the ground,
The joints divide; and in extremest throes,
He hangs suspended on each bleeding wound.
Come, sinners, see your king enthroned and crowned.
Two wretched criminals with Thee they slay;
Thou in the midst—our pardon and our peace;
Through Thy own spirit, offering up to-day
The Sacrifice, in which all shadows cease,—
The great Oblation of our souls' release.

CXIV.

What voice is that goes forth upon the air?
Redeeming love in every blessed tone;
“Father, forgive them;” was the Saviour's prayer;
“They know not what they do.” How sweet has flown
That breathing incense to Thy Father's throne!
Thy garments now the soldiery divide;
Fulfilling what the prophecies declare,—
While the chief priests, who round the cross abide,
Triumph to see Thy writhing body there;—
Nor their unfeeling taunts of bitter mockery spare.

CXV.

How solemn, o'er that thorn encircled head,
The title of the Saviour's cross appears !
Yet, by the blinded multitude, 'tis read,
And made the burthen of their boisterous jeers.
But most the priests condemn His groans and tears ;
"Others He saved, Himself He cannot save"—
Oh veiled hearts ! who could not thus perceive
How freely, He, His life an offering gave ;
Still they delight His sacred soul to grieve ;
"Down from the cross descend, and we will then
believe."

CXVI.

The Roman soldiers mingle in the jest.
"Art Thou their king ? then save Thyself," they say :
Their vinegar, in mocking pledges press'd.—
Yea, even a thief who suffered on that day,
Does the dark malice of his heart betray ;
"If Thou be Christ, then save Thyself and us."
But one, a memorable child of grace,
Saved from the venom of the cross' curse,
Thus spake, while flowing tears each other chase
Down the death paleness of his softening face :

CXVII.

"Hast thou no fear of God, seeing that we,
Alike, the lingering penalty endure ?
A fate indeed we merited ; but He,
Though doomed with us, is innocent and pure."
Then turning to the Saviour ; far too poor,

Too perishing to heed the scorers there,
Confessed the Son, even on the shameful tree.
How full the faith of thy believing prayer,
Thou deeply humbled child of Calvary!
“When in Thy kingdom come, then Lord remember
me.”

CXVIII.

Scarce the imploring lips had ceased to pray.
When, with o'erflowing love, the Saviour cries,
(Oh precious promise!) “Verily to-day,
Thou shalt with Jesus be, in paradise.”
Come, now, ye sinners, from the haunts of vice,
Yea from the horror of your death beds come;
Yea from your gibbets stretch your bloody hands,
Ye penitents, His bosom is your home:
He draws you to His cross with loving hands,
And wide, for your poor souls, the door of heaven
expands.

CXIX.

Oh! Thou, who lovest to exalt the weak!
And o'er this criminal didst pour such light,
When the chief priests, who should in wisdom speak,
Now grope at noon-day in the darkest night;
Still in Thy great atoning work, delight,—
Still magnify the freedom of Thy grace,—
Still prove, 'tis not our righteousness that saves;—
The legal pride of man's vain heart abase,
From where, o'er Calvary, love's banner waves,
To where the last redeemed forsake their silent
graves.

CXX.

But thou, who dost His present grace refuse,
If bold in sin, thy heart should vainly dare
The extent of His redeeming power to abuse,
And trust salvation to a death-bed prayer,
Look on the other thief, and Oh beware !
His heart has grown as callous as a stone,—
On which the rays of mercy vainly shine ;
'Tis Satan's seat, 'tis reprobation's throne ;
Thou who wouldst slight to-day His love benign,
Oh tremble ! lest that sinner's doom be thine.

CXXI.

Return we to the cross, that awful scene,—
Thy soul for greater wonders still prepare ;
Beneath the cross, stands one of lowly mien,
Who bows her head with grief that none may share ;
Those lovely lineaments resemblance bear
To that mysterious sufferer on the tree,
As much, perhaps, as might in mortal dwell ;
Often she in His face gazed silently ;
Then would her eye-lids close, her bosom swell,
Till, gushing through the lids, the tears abundant
fell.

CXXII.

Thou ! who didst nourish, in His infancy,
The babe of Bethlehem, with heavenly bliss :
Oh ! didst thou think, with Him, on Calvary,
Thou e'er shouldst know so dread an hour as this ?
Whom thou, with reverential awe wouldst kiss
And stay His infant cry ; thou mayst not now

Release Him from excruciating pain ;
Nor wipe the death sweat from His patient brow ;
Nor staunch the death stream, from His dearest vein.
A sword goes through thy soul, thy Son, thy Lord
is slain !

CXXIII.

With her, the wife of Cleophas : and she—
Mary—the loving and the much forgiven ;
And with those faithful sisters John we see,
The only one of the beloved eleven—
To him the love that knows no fear was given.
When Jesus saw His tender mother nigh,
And that disciple, His beloved one,
Filled with a son's affection, standing by,
Kindly He spake : “ Woman, behold thy son ; ”
Touched with the gracious words, her heart o'errun ;

CXXIV.

“ Behold thy mother,” to His friend, He said.
How grateful did the precious token come ;
From that dear hour, with filial care, he led
Sad Mary to the quiet of his home ;—
And did till death her faithful son become.
Thou gentle heart ! that midst such pangs could move,
And sinners pardon, mourning saints console ;
For many waters could not quench Thy love,
Nor floods o'erwhelm it, though they fiercely roll ;—
The eternal element, of Thy eternal soul.

CXXV.

As yet, midst all this anguish, how serene !
The unconscious loveliness of nature's face ;

How beautiful ! as death had never been,
Flows the sweet sun-light, o'er that solemn place,
Where Jesus suffered for the human race.
And faith could almost weep, to see the day,
Without one conscious token, gliding by ;
Nor loved the mellow sun-beams, as they lay,
In vernal glory, on mount Calvary ;—
And beat on the faint heads of those who slowly die.

CXXVI.

But lo, a change ! Gone has the cheerful glow ;
See, from the darkening heavens, the sun retire !
And must Thy soul a deeper anguish know,—
Veiling the face of the Almighty sire ?
Yea, in a living death the Saviour hung ;
While that tremendous darkness filled the sky ;
In anguish then, beyond a mortal tongue,
His soul in travail breathed that piercing cry,
“ Eloi, eloi, lama sabacthani !”

CXXVII.

“Hear Him,” they cry, “Upon Elias call ;”
Their scoffs renewed with the dispersing gloom,—
While one presents the vinegar and gall—
“ Stay,” cry the rest, “ See if Elias come,
To save his suppliant from impending doom.”
Ye evening wolves ; that ravin for the prey ;
Ye hearts of adamant ! that will not bend,
Nor your remorseless hate its fury stay ;
Soon, soon in death, your utmost power shall end ;—
And His freed soul to paradise ascend.

CXXVIII.

Now in the beauty of its wonted glow,
Again appears the lately darkened heaven ;
As if the power of that strong cry of woe,
Far, far away, the clouds of wrath had driven,
And strength and calmness were to Jesus given.
Up to the blue expanse, He lifts His eyes ;
His dying eyes with coming triumph shine ;—
“Father,” (in full confiding tones, He cries,
Feeling the fatal hour,) “Lo ! I resign
My parting spirit to thy care benign.”

CXXIX.

The intolerable thirst of torture's death,
To close Thy burning agonies, takes place ;
Beneath the twining of that gory wreath,
The damp cold sweat drops from Thy patient face.—
One pang remains, to seal Thy work of grace.
“I thirst,” He cries. Ye cruel foes, who dare
To mock the cravings of His utmost need ;
Oh ! bitter as your hate the draught ye bear
To those cold lips upon the sponge and reed ;
’Tis His last woe, speed, ye tormentors, speed.

CXXX.

Meekly His lips received the cup of pain ;
Then, from those lips, went forth a mighty cry ;
Earth ne’er shall echo to its like again ;
Rolling along her clear and silent sky,
His dying song of perfect victory.
“’Tis finished,” Jesus cried ; Oh happy sound !
When thy dear bride is gathered unto thee,

And thou art with thy spousal garland crowned,
These words, the burthen of her song shall be,
And thrill the depths of blessed eternity.

CXXXI.

He bows His head and now gives up the ghost!—
The breath of love has left those lips a while!
Yet transient is the cold destroyer's boast,
And even in death He wears a victor's smile.
But while He looks so bless'd, so fair the while,
What omens witness to His name around!
What means the rending of the rugged rocks?
What means the trembling of the yawning ground
Beneath the sudden earthquake's fearful shock?
Why, from yon ancient tombs, do their pale tenants
flock?

CXXXII.

What means it, that the anointed priest turns pale,
Offering the sacrifice at even-tide?
When suddenly is rent the Holiest veil,
Oh 'twas the expiring groan when Jesus died,
Did the firm marble with its power divide;—
And heaved the bosom of a world restored;
Opened the sepulchres of other days;
And on the ear of death, like music, poured—
The resurrection power at once displays,
And woke the saints to ecstasy of praise.

CXXXIII.

“’Tis finished!” Well these words the veil might rend.
Shadows are past; the true Passover dies,—

In Him, the figures of the ritual end.
He is the soul's eternal sacrifice ;
He is the bridegroom, and with mystic ties
And awful rites, He on mount Calvary
Hath wed us to His agonizing breast.
Yea, Oh my soul ! He hath espoused thee !
And in the heaven of His eternal rest,
Thou and the pardoned thief shall be forever bless'd. .

CXXXIV.

The bold centurion, pale and trembling, stands ;
His very soul in deepest wonder awed ;
In full conviction cries, with lifted hands,
" Truly, this Jesus was the Son of God."
Oh ! who could stand upon that blood stained sod,
And view the quaking earth, the opening grave,—
The shivering rocks, the changing heavens see,
Nor own the glorious record that he gave !
Yet the proud priests reject all nature's plea ;
Deaf, when her solemn voice proclaimed his Deity.

CXXXV.

Now, lest their lingering death a feast should mar,
They break the legs of the expiring thieves.
Poor penitent ! behold the waiting car ;
Soon as thy soul thy tortured body leaves,
Thy Jesus to His heaven that soul receives.
The middle tree the soldiers next approach ;
But death, consummate death, does there appear ;
Those pallid looks the awful truth avouch ;
Yet one cold heart, that knew no love nor fear,
Rushed to my Saviour with his open spear—

CXXXVI.

And pierced Him to the heart, and opened wide
The crimson fountain of His love for me ;
Gushed forth the purple and the crystal tide :—
Oh ! let me ! let me bathe my soul in Thee,—
Stream of the rock, cleft on mount Calvary ;
So shall I look on Him I pierced, and weep
Not tears of pain ; but grateful tears shall flow
When Thou shalt come, the Shepherd of the sheep ;
And the dear wound, within Thy side, shall glow,
A blessed token to Thy flock below.

CXXXVII.

The day of days is o'er ; the sun has gone ;
Soon will the ruddy twilight melt in gloom ;
Yet still awhile, his lingering smile is thrown,
In glorious beauty, o'er the land of doom ;—
Gilding the olden prophet's garnished tomb,
And bathing, in its soft and solemn light,
The unburied corpse of Israel's holy One.
So o'er the darkness of her long, long night,
A lingering twilight, from her heavenly sun,
Shall hover o'er the land, ere mercy's day is done.

CXXXVIII.

And Pilate sat beneath his stately dome ;
The day, for him, had pass'd in ease and pride ;
He felt no tortures in his princely home :
What though some vulgar malefactors died ?
Greatness is not to sympathy allied.
Who enters now the almost vacant hall ?
His look is humble as a saint's can be ;

But by the costly robes that round him fall,
Expressive of his state and quality,
A noble Jewish counsellor is he.

CXXXIX.

Fearless of the contempt of all his peers,
To Pilate he prefers his tender plea,
Even with an earnestness almost to tears ;
“ Oh let the Governor bestow on me,
The corpse of Jesus, from the accursed tree.”
Oh true disciple ! though he could not save
His dearest Master from their cruel doom,
In face of the whole priesthood hear him claim
The body of their victim, to inhume
With funeral honors, in his own new tomb.

CXL.

And Pilate, having learned that He was dead
Beyond all doubt, now grants the fond request.
And Joseph goes, new grace upon him shed,
Through all his scorning brethren, inly bless'd,
Till his dear Saviour in his tomb shall rest ;
Till he has wept his fill o'er every wound.
He thinks it long, and soon the hill he gains,
There the close watching sentinels he found ;
There yet upon the cross, the Lord remains,
While all around unearthly silence reigns.

CXLI.

And who has come to join the sacred rite,
With myrrh and aloes to embalm his Lord ?
'Tis Nicodemus ; he who came by night,

And drank salvation from the living word.

With these some gentle hearts, whom love had stirred.

Women, who watched to His last agony,

(Behold ! the broken hearted Magdalene,

The holy sisterhood from Galilee,)

True mourners at this funeral are seen,

Gathering around the cross with deep, dejected mien.

CXLII.

They take the body down : each cruel nail

From the cold purple wounds they gently draw ;

At every touch the buriers waxed pale,

And to each other looked their love and awe.

But when the side's deep cavity they saw,

Could these refrain ? did they not sob aloud ?

Were they not loth that blessed face to miss

As they enwrap Him in the linen shroud ?

. Did they not kneel, and give the reverent kiss ?

For ne'er were funeral rites so full of grief as this.

CXLIII.

See to yon garden, move the mourning train ;

And by the moon-beams lonely light, behold

The sacred tomb where never man has lain ;

There, in that house of silence, dark and cold

They laid the Lord ; the ponderous stone they rolled,

And turned away, with strong affection still.

Till all was o'er, lingered the sisters there ;

Then slowly wind their way a-down the hill,

And ere they sink to rest, with zealous care,

A choice embalming for their Lord prepare.

CXLIV.

The Priests and Pharisees had known no rest ;
And early, even on the Sabbath day,
To Pilate with another suit they press'd,—
With boding torment lest they lose their prey.
“Lo, sir, we heard that bold deceiver say,
—While yet alive—‘ After three days are past,
I will arise again.’—By thy command,
Then, send a watch, seal the sepulchre fast ;
Lest some disciple of His chosen band,
Steal Him away, while night o’erspreads the land,

CXLV.

“And to the people, in their falsehood, tell :
‘ Jesus the bondage of the grave has burst ;’
And through the rumor of this miracle,
The final error shall exceed the first.”
Pilate, who saw their fear and pride accùrst,
Replied : “ Ye have a watch, my power I grant,
Go then, and make His grave sure as ye can.”
“ Sure as ye can !” perchance that secret taunt,
Like lightning through the accusing conscience ran,—
A burning witness for the Son of Man.

CXLVI.

Haste blinded men. The Lord’s sepulchre seal ;
Charge well your watch ; the important trust secure.
Glory to Jesus ! your infuriate zeal
His made His resurrection yet more sure ;
With every maddening shout that rose on high,
When He to ignominious death was driven,

Onward ye urged the hour of victory.

Now to His rising have ye witness given,
Strong as the everlasting gates of heaven.

III.

THE RESURRECTION.

CANTO III.

I.

O H Night ! how beautiful thou art alone !
Thy solemn charms are not for mortal eyes :
I gaze upon thy solitary throne,
While the whole world in chained slumber lies.
How oft the Man of Sorrows, when below,
When Night her melancholy reign began,
Prostrate upon some mountain's lonely brow,
Poured forth His breaking heart in love to man,
While the still hours of rest unheeded ran.

II.

But now no more on any silent hill,
That prostrate form is seen in humble prayer ;
No more the wrestlings of His spirit fill,
With supplicating sighs, the hallowed air :
For sinners' hands the sinner's friend have slain.
In this deep solitude His grave I see—
Oh, hopeless sight !—bound in Death's icy chain,
The heart that mourned, the tongue that pled for me,
Upon yon lonely mount, or by the plashing sea.

III.

Are ye not conscious, oh ye watching stars !

In this momentous night, Who slumbers here ?

Gleaming on this cold rock where Envy bars

His holy sepulchre with jealous fear ;

Glancing upon the armored sentinels,

A rude and godless group, who, stretched around,

Heed not the holy charm that round them dwells ;

But many a soulless laugh, with idle sound,

Awakes the echoes of this sacred ground.

IV.

Though man may sleep in heartless unbelief,

God shall a voice in silent Nature find ;

Her rocks were rent before a Saviour's grief :

Now when the chains of death that Saviour bind,

Surely her stars, her sweet and solemn sky,

Seem of some coming mighty change to tell.

My soul is touched. Fly, ye swift moments, fly !

Dissolve the meaning of this secret spell,

That bids my heart with awe prophetic swell.

V.

The stars are waning—day is at its birth—

A faint grey tint along the east extends :—

Oh God ! what shock has rocked the silent earth ?

What glorious angel from the sky descends ?

The affrighted keepers, as he downward wends,

Upon the trembling ground are breathless thrown ;

While his immortal strength the angel bends,

And, like some dying monster's parting groan,

Back with harsh noise recoils the massive stone.

VI.

What form serene, all majesty and love,
Issues in glory from yon darksome cave ?
By the dear scars He yet shall wear above,
It is the Man who died my soul to save !
Hail, conqueror over death, and o'er the grave !
Oh, let me wash Thy feet with tears most free,
Thou who the powers of earth and hell didst brave ;
Yea bor'st Thy Father's frown, that I might be
Forever in the heaven of heavens with Thee !

VII.

Confess'd the Resurrection and the Life !
Oh, pause before His vacant tomb awhile !
See how triumphant from His recent strife,
Eternal joy breaks in His glorious smile !
Look on that face late marred with buffets vile ;
What full effusions of delight appear !
'Tis o'er—'tis past—the great Redeemer's toil :
The bright, the morning star is risen here,
And heaven is filled with praise, and hell with fear.

VIII.

Angels are at His feet, with heaven's best songs ;
But yet the Saviour's heart is on the wing :
For His own dear redeemed, His spirit longs
To turn to joy their cup of suffering ;
O'er their glad hearts His living arms to fling ;
To show them all that He for them has wrought ;
To bid the founts of full salvation spring,
Where their sad hearts had withered into drought—
This is the work that fills His yearning thought.

IX.

But viewless now awhile from human eyes,
Is He who to His God has man restored ;
Yet glorious beneath the shadowy skies,
Throned on the rock, the angel of the Lord,
There yet the guard stretched on the dewy sward,
For their presumptuous watch are swooning thrown ;
Nor will the priest's poor guerdon of reward
Make them forget the terrors they have known,
When God's strong angel rolled away the stone.

X.

Yes, there the angel sat ; but none could see,
The radiant form, save they to whom 'twas given ;
To other eyes a hidden mystery—
Such privilege enjoy the sons of heaven !
Yea, at the earthquake when the seals were riven,
A gifted eye might see the angels fair,
Oh every purple cloud of morning driven,
Flock to the tomb, rejoicing to be there,
And filling with their hymns the charmed air.

XI.

Falls the faint dawning on yon distant train ;
From out the gates they come with gentle pace,
Bearing their spicy burthens hand in hand,
Tears in their eyes, and sorrow in their face :
Yet all around them is a breathing grace,
Hallowing their grief with its unearthly charm ;
Their Master's spirit in their looks we trace,
Mild, though distressed, and sorrowful, but calm—
They come their dear Redeemer to embalm.

XII.

Yet one there is, whose large dark eyes o'erhung
With deeper gloom fast melting into tears,
And trembling arm about her sisters flung,
Beyond the rest opprest with pain appears :—
Oh, Magdalene ! the stain of sinful years
Removed by His all-purifying breath,
The Crucified still to thy heart endears,
As in that day when thy affection poured
Thy costliest odors o'er thy honored Lord.

XIII.

But scarce the gate was passed when, sad, they said—
“ Who will for us the ponderous stone remove ? ”
They could have rent it from its rocky bed,
Had their frail hands been mighty as their love !
But Magdalene, whom deep affections move,
Unlinked her from the band and onward pressed,
And far before them reached the shady grove,
Entered alone the sacred place of rest,
As the pale morning moon was fading in the west.

XIV.

Veiled was the angel from her eyes that morn ;
She only saw the cumbrous stone removed—
She only saw that precious corpse was gone,
And inward sighs her deep affliction proved—
Then sought with quickened steps His friends belov'd,
Peter and John—to these the tidings told—
Their buried Lord she knew not where removed—
The mighty stone away at distance rolled—
And bids them hasten and the scene behold.

XV.

Meanwhile the other Mary, and her train,
More slow of step, yet with a fervent will,
At last the consecrated garden gain,
Come to embalm their Lord with utmost skill :
They pass the gate—all is serenely still—
Gently the many-tinted vapors lie
Along the summit of that holy hill ;
A secret power in nature, from on high,
Awees those who to the sepulchre draw nigh.

XVI.

But lo ! what awful vision meets their eyes,
As, now advancing through the opening trees,
The glorious form descended from the skies,
Each of the sister band with trembling sees !
A joy comes o'er them, like a grateful breeze
That on the winter's verge preludes the spring ;
Touched with an awe that did their spirits please,
They, gazing, speechless to each other cling,
While thus the angel of the Eternal King :—

XVII.

“ Fear not ! I know 'tis Jesus whom ye seek—
He is not here—the Lord has risen to-day,
Even as before His death ye heard Him speak :
Lo ! now to Galilee He bends His way,
There shall you meet your Lord—no longer stay—
Spread the glad news as His dear friends you see,
That Death and Hell are subject to His sway ;
Declared with power the Son of God to be,
The Almighty Father of Eternity.”

XVIII.

They spoke not, but their gratulating looks,
Exchanged in silence, all their bliss expressed ;
As with exulting souls their way they took,
Pleased to obey the angel's high behest :
Where Salem's towers gleam like a regal crest,
As the pure light of day became more great,
They to their sorrowing friends their course addressed ;
Strange wonders met them ere they reached the gate,
Yet pause they not these wonders to relate.

XIX.

But, now arisen from their dead affright,
Towards the city quickly haste the guard,
And to the priests report the eventful night :
The wisdom of their gravest council marred—
The rocking earth—the sepulchre unbarred—
Th' august descent of God's high angel there—
The immediate resurrection of the Lord,
In endless life majestically fair !—
These tidings drive the priesthood to despair.

XX.

Yet, rallying their thoughts, in desperate spite,
A large reward they to the soldiers give ;
Bidding them say, " His followers came by night,
And while we slumbered stole Him from the grave."
Assuring them they would the danger brave,
Should the bold falsehood spread to Pilate's court,
And by their policy detection save ;
Persuading Pilate, in their wily sort,
To give his credence to their false report.

XXI.

Peter, and that disciplē so beloved,
Ran to the tomb when Mary's word was said,
But, by the power of tender friendship moved,
John was the first to reach the rocky bed—
Yet went not in, perchance from solemn dread:
But Peter followed, and, more bold to dare,
Both entering, found no traces of the dead,
But the new grave clothes lying folded there—
So sadly leave the tomb, and to their friends repair.

XXII.

Poor Mary! doubt ran chilling through thy breast:
Thy Saviour's body gone! an angel's word,
Would have no power to give thy spirit rest:
No less than plain communion with thy Lord,
Could the true balm to thy sick heart afford.
She wept, and, bending, gazed within the tomb—
When, lo! what glory on her sight is poured!
Two sons of heaven, in bright immortal bloom!—
Far flow their shining robes amidst the gloom.

XXIII.

Guarding the sacred place where Jesus lay,
They to the weeping friend of Jesus spake:—
“Woman, why weepest thou?” they kindly say—
For that deep sobbing heart seemed nigh to break.
“Alas!” she cried, “my Lord away they take,
Nor know I now the place where He is laid:”—
Away she turned—for nothing there could slake
Her heart's full thirst in Life's true stream to wade,
Nor Gabriel's pity could her sorrows aid.

XXIV.

Alas, poor soul ! who now shall comfort her ?

She turned, and by the morning twilight, saw
One whom she thought to be the gardener—

So plain the air the seeming stranger wore ;

His pitying look but made her weep the more :

“ Woman, why weepest thou ? ” the stranger cried ;

“ Whom dost thou seek, thy heart with grieving sore ? ”

While her full soul at every accent sighed ;

She spake, and earnestly the stranger eyed :—

XXV.

“ If thou hast borne Him hence, tell me, I pray

Oh ! show me where His dear remains abide,
That I may bear the blessed corpse away.”

“ Mary ! ” the kind, familiar voice replied :—

Deep through her soul the changing accents glide—
’Tis her own Saviour ! ’tis her risen Lord !

One precious word alone her joy supplied :
“ Rabboni, Master ! ” all her heart was stirred,
And poured its gladness in that one sweet word.

XXVI.

“ Touch Me not, Mary ! for I have not yet

Risen to my God, through yon empyrean sky :
Go to my brethren—yet their eyes are wet ;

Yet for my death their doubtful spirits sigh.

Tell them their risen Lord ascends on high :
I to My Father and your Father go,

And to my God and yours :—the broken tie
Is now renewed—and, through a Saviour’s woe,
Shall Love and Peace to endless ages ~~flow~~.”

XXVII.

Bless'd messenger ! thy happy right to preach
A risen Jesus, was not given by man ;
Thy sweet commission His dear truth to teach,
Pure from His lips in words of glory ran :
Go forth, and tell, as none but sinners can,
To thy lone friends, their Lórd's triumphant love.
Thus, when the deluge ceased, and peace began,
With haleyon wings, o'er the still waves to move,
Forth o'er the waters flew the timid dove.

XXVIII.

But they believed not, for their faith was weak—
So did their sorrows o'er their souls prevail ;
And all the gladdening truth she came to speak
To the apostles, seems an idle tale.
But when she saw her ardent witness fail
To rouse the courage of their drooping hearts
Over her face again she drew the veil ;
While from her eyes the tearful token starts,
Grieved at their unbelief, the gentle saint departs.

XXIX.

Meanwhile, her female friends pursue the road,
Urged by the angel and their own desires,
While fervent gladness in their spirit glowed :
And then in melody to heaven aspires,
As if, in answer to th' ascending fires,
Jesus himself appears with light replete !
They sink before Him, like the angelic choirs,
Clasp with a humble love His sacred feet,
And with ecstasie awe a risen Saviour greet.

XXX.

"All hail!" was Thy kind salutation, Lord,
To these Thy friends! then, "Do not fearful be;
(Oh! how Thy tenderness their hearts assured!)
Go, bid my brethren haste to Galilee;
For there the risen Jesus shall they see."
Swift as the summer lightning hastes away,
He disappeared, even while they bend the knee:
Awhile in deepest gratitude they pray—
Then, silently go on their happy way—

XXXI.

And other women on that day appeared
At Jesus' grave, for the same deed of love;
And were by visions of Immortals cheered.
To heal their grief, commissioned from above:—
Thus ever may the soul of woman prove
The living temple of believing zeal;
Thus ever ready in His work to move,
Thus ever may her God Himself reveal,
And on her heart His resurrection seal.

* * * * *

XXXII.

Noon now was past: the golden, mellow day
Rolled to the west: rich tints of purple hue
Along the sky in royal splendor lay,
Varying the beauty of that deepening blue;
A goodlier day creation never knew;
A Sabbath smile o'er lovely nature shone:
It was like heaven her placid face to view,
And feel that peace the world has never known,
About the gathered heart in silent musings thrown.

XXXIII.

See, linked like brothers true, where yonder pair
To Emmaus' distant village bend their course ;
With solemn gesture, and with sorrowing air,
On some sad theme they earnestly discourse.
But while the tears their frequent passage force,
And while their burthened hearts in words they free,
Another Traveller, from some unknown source,
With friendly spirit, joins their company—
Then thus address'd the brethren courteously :—

XXXIV.

“ What manner of communications, friends,
Are these ye have as ye your way pursue ?”—
Such goodness with His open bearing blends,
At once their hearts in free communion drew.
With solemn vehemence, one of the two,
Cleophas named, to the strange traveller said—
“ Art thou a distant stranger, whom we view ?
And hast not heard the events, so strange and dread,
That through the land of Israel are spread ?”

XXXV.

“ What are these wondrous things, of which ye speak ?”
The unknown Traveller again replied :
Cleophas answered, with a kindling cheek—
“ Concerning one whose name is magnified,
Who raised the dead, who quelled the impetuous tide—
Jesus, the blessed Seer of Galilee ;
Yet Him our priests and rulers crucified
Yea, caused the just and Holy One to be,
Condemned and slain upon th' accursed tree.

XXXVI.

“ But we had fondly trusted this was He,
Who should our fallen Israel redeem :
Beside all this, since His last agony,
Thrice has the day repaired her golden beam,
Yet certain women whom we faithful deem,
Who visited His sepulchre when dawn
Spread o'er the orient her earliest gleam,
Returning to us while we weep and mourn,
Declare that they had found His body gone ;

XXXVII.

But they a radiant apparition saw,
Celestial messengers, who testified
Jesus had risen, and should die no more—
He whom the Jews on Calvary crucified :
And through their words though some in doubt
abide,
Yet were there others of our company
With ready haste to the sepulchre hied,
And found the grave all tenantless and free,
But yet their living Lord they did not see.”

XXXVIII.

“ Oh ! fools, and slow of heart ” the Stranger cries,
“ All that the seers have spoken to believe,”—
While sudden lightning flashes from His eyes :
“ Why will ye not the Scripture truth perceive,
Concerning Him for whom ye idly grieve ?
Around His sacred and devoted head,
These prophecies their rays unbroken weave ;
The suffering, death, the rising from the dead,
The endless glory on Messiah shed.”

XXXIX.

Then, with all searching light and thrilling power,
Began the gracious Traveller to explain,
From early Moses to that present hour,
Unlocking every word, that they might gain
The full prediction of Messiah's pain—
His torturing death—His resting in the grave—
His resurrection and triumphant reign ;
River of life ! 'twas Thy refreshing wave
In every word He to their spirits gave.

XL.

Emmaus, knowest thou what blissful scene
Soon in thy quiet bosom will take place ?
Thy evening heaven, it wears a look serene,
As not unconscious of the coming grace
Now near thee, the three travellers we trace—
Two have fulfilled the journey of the day ;
The other bids farewell with quickened pace,
As He would further go another way—
But both the brethren constrained His stay.

XLI.

" Abide with us," they said, " day is far spent "—
And thus their hospitable spirit showed ;
Yet mingling with that spirit's pure intent,
Was the sweet influence He around them strowed :
So precious was His lore along the road.
Yet, seemingly, a slow assent He lends,
Till they constrain Him home to their abode ;
But what a smile with His mild features blends,
While following to their homes the happy friends !

XLII.

See, in that cool and shady place, is spread
The light repast, and they partake the fare ;
But, lo ! the stranger Guest now takes the bread,
And, rising, bless'd it as His own it were,
And gave it with that well known look and tone :
At once they saw the blessed Jesus there,
At once their own beloved Lord was known,
And the full heaven of heavens upon them shone.

XLIII.

But while they gazed, He vanished from their sight,
Yet His own joy He left upon their souls ;
'They, they had seen their risen Lord that night,
And peace was their's, and joy beyond control
While from their eyes the tears of rapture roll
"Did not our hearts within us burn " they say,
" While He unfolded the prophetic roll ?
And while He talked with us upon the way,
Did not our hearts confess His secret sway ?"

XLIV.

Love knows no weariness : to tell their friends,
Back to the distant city they return,
While the full moon the tranquil heaven ascends,
Few were their words, their thoughts all language
spurn.
Oh ! pure communion of the silent mind,
When through the spirit we the soul discern,
And to the love of Jesus all resigned,
No words can tell the secret peace we find.

XLV.

They pass the gates, and now no time they lose,
But seek that lonely room without delay,
Where closely shut (from terror of the Jews,)
The holy brethren have convened to pray.
Entering, at once th' exulting words they say—
"The Lord has risen! the Lord has risen indeed!
'Twas He appeared to Simon on this day:"—
Then with the happy story they proceed.

XLVI.

But, while they speak, a sudden power has come—
A solemn awe is o'er their spirits thrown;
And in the breathless stillness of that room,
Jesus Himself appears among His own!
"Peace to My friends!" He cries, with love unknown:
How great that peace, if they could now believe!
But they, so timid and so doubtful grown,
As though an apparition they perceive,
With trembling fright to one another cleave.

XLVII.

"Why are ye troubled, friends?" the Saviour cried;
"Why rise such fearful thoughts at what ye see?"
Behold the tokens in My hand and side!
These are the wounds to show that I am He.
Touch your Redeemer, and from doubt be free!
My living, breathing Self to you restored.
A spirit hath not flesh and bones like Me;
It is your crucified and risen Lord—
Believe, and in your hearts receive His word!"

XLVIII.

Doubt vanishes before a view so plain ;
Yet hardly they, for very joy, believed :
But, to remove what fear might yet remain,
Part of their fare He presently received ;
This simple act their hearts has quite relieved ;
Now even faith is swallowed up in sight :—
Jesus the gracious victory perceived ;
Love from His eyes flowed in full streams of light—
Then came the word of counsel and of might.

XLIX.

“ These are the words of prophecy, I said,
While in the world, and dwelling with you still ;
That all things ye in Moses’ law have read,
The Psalms and prophecies, I must fulfil.”
He spake, and, at the fiat of His will,
Their minds expand revealed truth to see :
Thus, went He on, with His unerring skill,
Unveiling to their minds from error free :
The spirit of the hidden mystery.

L.

Then, at the close, “ ’Tis written thus,” He cries ;
“ And it behoved Christ to suffer thus,
Then from the dead on the third day to rise,
Redeeming man from the primeval curse :
Go, then, and through the world His truth disperse,
Repentance and remission in His name,
To social man, to savage wild and fierce :
Now are the merits of that death of shame
The sole foundation of the sinner’s claim.

LI.

"Peace, peace be unto you! as I am sent
By My great Father, even so I send,
With these glad tidings through the world's extent,
My chosen witnesses when I ascend."
Now as with pleasing awe they all attend,
Solemn He near them drew and on them breathed;
Instant they felt the Holy Ghost descend!
Like living fire about their souls it wreathed,
As He the gift unspeakable bequeathed.

LII.

"Receive the Holy Ghost! Whatever sins
Ye may remit those sins are all forgiven;
He that from you no absolution wins,
He hath not the absolving grace from heaven."
Thus He commissioned the elect eleven;
A right so plenary was given then,
Because to them was a discernment given,
Beyond the power of a mere human ken,
To penetrate and read the hearts of men.

LIII.

Thomas, called Didymus, one of the train,
Was absent when the Saviour thus appeared:
To him th' apostles' witness was in vain;
For still, in his misgiving heart he feared
Some phantom vision of his Lord revered.
"Except I see, and search the marks," he cried,
"Where the deep nails His hands and feet have
seared,
And thrust my hand into His living side,
My heart shall still in unbelief abide."

LIV.

Eight days had passed—eight days! a golden age!
They did not see their Lord in open view,
But blissful hopes their happy thoughts engage,
And days of heaven upon the earth they knew,
For all the Roman and the watchful Jew.
Thrice blessed Saviour! even the very slave
May have a secret treasure hid in Thee:
No circumstance can check Thy power to save:
And Afric's son in bonds, in Thee is free,
Thou soul and spirit of true liberty!

LV.

Clear dawns the morning of the second week;
A living peace is in the glowing air;
Soft are the skies, so balmy and so meek,
As the mild soul of Jesus hovered there.
Calm as that morn, His followers repair
To yonder secret haunt—the door they close,
For the Jews eyed them with suspicious care:
Thomas alone feels not this blest repose,
Not yet believing that his Lord arose.

LVI.

Bending their heads in silent prayer, they seem
Feeling the power of His o'erwhelming hand,
When, like the beauty of a glorious dream,
Jesus did in their midst revealed stand!
"Peace be to you!" He said, and lifts His hand,
In token of the blessing of His grace:
Joy rose to fullness in that silent band,
Save one, who stood and trembled in his place,
While love and shame contended in his face.

LVII.

"And is it true?" he thought; "And is it He?"

Jesus, who read his soul with look benign,
Spoke in His love—"Thy finger reach to Me,
And see and feel these pierced hands of Mine!

Yea, hither reach that trembling hand of thine
And thrust it here within thy Saviour's side!

Be thou convinced by this assured sign;
Let doubts and fears no more thy soul divide,
But clasp in faith thy Jesus crucified."

LVIII.

Those marks, those cruel marks of death and shame,

The love and mild reproof together blent,
The look of tenderness that with it came,

Deep to the heart of faithless Thomas went:—

O'erwhelmed and lost in love's divine extent,
"My Lord! my God!" he cries, with holy awe,

As he his whole believing soul would vent,
And would more humbly his dear Lord adore,
For the cold unbelief he felt before.

LIX.

Imprinted on our hearts forever be

The precious truth which Jesus then express'd!
"Thomas, thou hast believed in seeing Me;
But those pure spirits are supremely bless'd,
Who have not seen, and yet the Lord confess'd."

What consolation in that promise fell,

For those who now desire in Him to rest!
If in the confidence of faith they dwell,
They in the heavenly blessing shall excel.

* * * * *

LX.

It fell upon a still and starry night,
The fishermen apostles on the deep,
Toiled with the net beneath that placid light,
Yet all in vain the silver wave they sweep,
And all in vain forbear their wonted sleep ;
The needful treasure of the sea denied,
Hungry and worn a weary vigil keep
These few poor brethren, till the morning tide :
Yet was there One who all their labors eyed.

LXI.

When in the twilight of that rising glow,
Upon that lonely shore a Stranger stood ;
None did the solitary Traveler know :
"Children," He asked, "Say, have ye any food ?"
"No," they reply, with low, disheartened mind :
The stranger answers, studious of their good,
"Straight be your nets into the wave declined,
Upon the vessel's right, and ye shall find."

LXII.

They, therefore, cast—and now they cannot draw,
For multitude of fish, their heavy net !
At once his Lord the loved apostle saw
Again on earth, with His poor followers met !
With tears of joy his glistening eyes are wet.
As soon as Peter heard that it was He,
He, with his zealous heart with love enflamed,
Girds on, for reverence and for decency,
His fisher's coat, and leaps into the sea !

LXIII.

In their light barge, the others gain the land
 Dragging the net rich with the scaly prize:
Soon as the happy brethren reach the strand,
 A cheering fire of coals invites their eyes,
 On which prepared their simple banquet lies.
Near stood the kindly Master of the feast,
 "Bring of the fish which ye have caught," He cries ;
Quick Simon ran, ere yet the words had ceased,
For ever with his faith his strength increased.

LXIV.

Joy doubled strength at once—the net he drew,
 Full of great fishes to the ample shore ;
But, though so large, and so abundant, too,
 Their weight the net miraculously bore.
 The feast is ready when the toil is o'er ;
The great provider bids them come and dine:
 None of them said, "Who art Thou?" filled with
 awe,
For well they traced, in every blessed sign,
His love benignant, and His power divine.

LXV.

When they had dined, the Lord to Peter turned :
 "Say, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me
Even more than these?" The soul of Peter burned :
 "Thou knowest Thy servant dearly loveth Thee."
"Feed thou My lambs,—(if such thy love may be.)"
 Yet still the searching question He pursues :
Still, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?"
 His warm confession Peter still renews :

"Feed thou My sheep!" Again the mild decree
Restores the apostolic liberty.

LXVI.

Yet the third time, "Lovest thou indeed?" said he:
He who had thrice denied Him, grieving, heard:
"All things," he cried, "are manifest to Thee;
Thou knowest that I dearly love Thee Lord!"
"Feed thou My sheep!" He spake; and peace re-
stored;
And a new unction on His servant poured.
Thus with His own He oft will meekly chide:
Oh, be His wisdom and His grace adored!
Thus to the quick the sinner's heart is tried,
Ere yet th' absolving blood can be applied.

LXVII.

A light prophetic shone in Jesus' face:
"Verily, verily, I say to thee,
Thou gird'st thyself now in thy youthful days,
And goest forth where'er thy will may be:
But when thou liv'st the years of age to see,
Another girds and bears thee from thy home,
Whither thou wouldst not by thy own decree."
Thus He foretold what death, in time to come,
Should be that follower's crown of martyrdom.

LXVIII.

Then thus He spake to Cephas: "Follow Me!"
Perchance for conference to the world unknown,
For many a spiritual, deep mystery,
Was doubtless to these early followers known.

Perhaps He willed some token should be shown,
He did his peace, his confidence restore,

That Peter midst his brethren should be known
As one whose sins were freely covered o'er,
And grace was more abundant than before.

LXIX.

But there was one who fain must follow too,

As Cephas with the Saviour turned away,
The loved disciple whom affection drew :

Cephas beheld him lingering in the way,
While his own thoughts on future visions stray.
“Tell me,” he said, “What shall this follower be?”

Jesus replied, “If I should will his stay,
Even till I come, his fate is nought to thee :
This be thy only care—to follow Me.”

* * * * *

LXX.

Like a faint light across the eastern heaven,
Appears the dawn ; but brightly lingering yet,
The morning stars to thee their light have given,
Oh ! haunt of angels, holy Olivet !

But now, thus early, in thy shades are met,
Not heavenly spirits but redeemed men :

The blessed One this hour and place has set ;
Here will He meet His chosen band again,
Though yet invisible to mortal ken.

LXXI.

Th' eleven are there, the chosen company :—
The daily sun, in his unending round,

No nobler fellowship shall ever see—

Nor by a holier tie of friendship bound,
Than those convened upon this sacred ground.
These, heavenly King ! thy regal jewels are !

With these, Immanuel is richly crowned ;
A life of toil and suffering they bear,
And then the triumph of their Saviour share.

LXXII.

Perhaps even now, above that holy height,
The destined chariot of the cloud appeared,
Floating upon that pure and flowing light ;
Perhaps the sight the great Redeemer cheered :
For now the Lord's advancing step was heard
By His loved brethren, in that silent place :
At once they deeply joyed, at once they feared,
As He before them stood, His heavenly face
All luminous with majesty and grace.

LXXIII.

He spake what glory in their souls had birth ;
Yet at His voice their inmost soul was awed !
“ All power is given to me in heaven and earth ;
Go, in the might of your ascending Lord,
Who will not send you comfortless abroad—
Go, from Jerusalem, through every coast,
And preach the gospel of a heaven restored ;
Go, gather in the great redeemed host,
Baptised to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost !

LXXIV.

“ He shall be saved, who does the truth receive ;
And he is lost who does the truth repel :—

These signs shall follow all who thus believe :
They, in my name, shall quell the powers of hell,
And with new tongues shall heavenly wonders tell—
Shall tread on serpents, and no deadly thing
Shall hurt the precious souls who in Me dwell ;
Their hands imposed beneath My healing wing,
Life to the dead, health to the sick shall bring.

LXXV.

"But do not from Jerusalem remove :
Behold, My Father's promise soon I send ;
Lo ! the baptising spirit of His love,
E'er many days, shall on your heads descend :
Then through the world your mission course you
bend."
"Lord," said His followers, "Wilt Thou at this day,
The kingdom from the foes of Israel rend ?"
(For still their darkness was not turned away,
Which looked for power, and pomp, and earthly sway.)

LXXVI.

"'Tis not for you," the Saviour kindly said,
"The times and seasons God alone can know,
But when the Holy Ghost on you is shed,
He will mysterious revelations show ;
Yea, will abundant power and gifts bestow,
That ye may tell the gospel's priceless worth :
Through Palestine your burning words shall glow—
Nor only through the country of your birth,
But to the utmost parts of all the earth.

LXXVII.

"Come round Me all!" They gather round the Lord,
He spreads His pierced hands and lifts His eyes,
And His full heart the parting blessing poured :
But, while He spake, from yonder mountain skies :
See the cloud sink, tinged with the morning dyes !
Amazed, they see the opening cloud enclose
The Man who made the atoning sacrifice ;
And every mind with love and wonder glows,
Watching that cloudy chariot as it rose.

LXXVIII.

Yea, even while He bless'd the chosen few,
While yet the listening ear His voice attends,
While yet the eye His brightening face may view,
Their parted Lord to the high heavens ascends,
Far from the gaze of His adoring friends :
The cloud receives Him from their longing sight ;
On the far rising cloud their gaze they bend,
And even when that cloud is lost in light,
Watch as they saw their Saviour's upward flight.

LXXIX.

While steadfast thus, two angel forms they see,
Who, clothed in white apparel, near them drew :
Kindly they spake—"Ye men of Galilee,
Why fix ye on yon heaven your earnest view ?
This Jesus, whom your eyes would fain pursue,
Shall in like manner from yon heaven return :"
Sweet consolation thus the mourners drew ;
A lively and a soothing hope they learn,
And, peaceful, to Jerusalem return.

TO
MISS MARGARET K. PARISH,
THE DEAR YOUNG FRIEND WHO HAS GIVEN HERSELF,
WITH SUCH FAITH AND DEVOTION,
To the Cause of Our Redeemer,
THIS POEM IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED,
BY THE AUTHOR.

IV. PENTECOST.

[Pentecost was written in 1869, as a sequel to the other Poems, and published in a volume by itself. It now appears as the fourth Canto of the Poem.]

"The fires that rushed on Sinai down
In sudden torrents dread,
Now gently light a glorious crown,
On every sainted head."

—KEBLE'S Whitsuntide.

CANTO IV.

INTRODUCTION TO PART FIRST.

(Time between Passover and Pentecost.)

LEBANON, Lebanon! Queen of the mountains!
Crowned with thy cedars and clear, sparkling fountains;
Now is the time when thy leaf buds are showing,
Now is the time when thy spring breeze is blowing,
Now the song of the turtle the valley is cheering,
And the full, ruddy buds on the vines are appearing.
All over the land of Jehovah's electing,
The ripe spring of the Orient her work is perfecting.
In the morning, what tintings of purple between
The breaking grey mists of the day dawn, are seen.

How early the shepherd is leading his flocks,
Where the stream gurgles down from the deep rifted
rocks.

The peasant goes forth with a song to his toil,
And in simple faith trusteth the seed to the soil.
The country is still, in Judea the blest,
But is their famed beautiful city at rest?
No, no; the Great Prophecy glooms o'er the land,
The times of the Gentiles—their triumph at hand—
And the terrible curse, their own wild imprecation,
Hangs like a charged thunderbolt, over the nation.
Although yet for a while the fires they smother,
Feuds are arising twixt Brother and Brother.
The mother receiveth her first born with tears,
And the joy of maternity fades into fears.
Yet ever long suffering, the wrath of the Lord
Not yet on the recreant people is poured.
One more act of mercy—one more act of grace,
E'er the judgment of Heaven descends on the race.

PART FIRST.

I.

HARAN) Is this thee, Enos? I had thought thee dead.

Our hopes once more to meet were not in vain ;
But since we parted many years have fled.

What brings thee to Jerusalem again ?

Pleasure, or friendship, or the love of gain ?

(ENOS) Not riches, for in Persia I've great wealth ;

But while at home, I said, " At any cost,
I, verily, for soul and body's health,

Will deck the Temple's Gate, at Pentecost ;"
So with a caravan the country crost.

II.

Here, Haran, my choice offering behold,

By hands of a most cunning workman wrought.
See how the grapes glow in the molten gold.

To give a rare and costly gift I sought,

And with a guard the sacred treasure brought.

Thou knowest that at the Gate called Beautiful,

Where costly gifts of rich devotion shine,
There hangs a vine of golden clusters full.

And of my pious fealty the sign,

I haste to add this precious gift of mine.

III.

But first pray say, how went the Passover ?

(HARAN) Now tell me, Enos, if thou hast not heard,
And yet of old Jerusalem a lover.

I thought the news the very world had stirred.

And yet to thee in Persia came no word ?

(ENOS) Amassing treasures, of my business full,

And in my warehouse often night and day,

My ears to Rumor's varying voice were dull.

What wondrous thing transpired on that great day,
I pray thee tell, and then I go my way.

IV.

(HARAN) First, I must ask thee, if no tidings came

Of a great Prophet out of Galilee,

Who filled the land with His surpassing fame—

Jesus of Nazareth ? Came no word to thee

Of all the works He wrought so marvellously ?

(ENOS) Yea, I remember during the past year,

When ruddy clouds the brow of Evening wreath,

A traveling Rabbi to my home drew near,

And out upon the open flowery heath,

All night we sat, the spreading palms beneath.

V.

There, till the low moon kissed the Western Sea,

In lovely words as ever Angel saith,

Sweetly he talked to my young wife and me—

And how she listened till she held her breath,

My young believing wife Elizabeth !

He told that out of Nazareth, that place

We always thought to Sin and Satan sold,

Proverbially destitute of grace,
A Prophet comes, whom His disciples hold
To be the very Christ our Oracles foretold.

VI.

He told how once a sudden tempest swept
Around their vessel, out in the mid sea,
While in the hinder part the Master slept—
To Him the trembling men affrighted flee;
“Save or we perish, Lord,” their urgent plea.
He rose, and forward on the deck He went—
One glance around the deafening tempest cast;
Strong winds, wild lightnings rent the firmament,
The roaring waves urged by the stormy blast,
Dashed their mad waters o’er the creaking mast.

VII.

Impetuous, on the cruel surges press—
Each black and threat’ning wave comes nearer still,
To overwhelm the vessel in distress.
He saw, and all He said was, “Peace, be still :”
The raging waters felt His mighty will.
Yea, as He spoke the word with grandeur meet,
Hushed in an instant was the wild alarm;
The waves slept in the moonlight at His feet;
The distant Heavens obedient to the charm,
Looked down on Earth, magnificently calm.

VIII.

All this, and more, our sacred Rabbi told,
He left us as the morning skies grew bright,
Charmed with his gracious speech, and yet behold,

Our next days guest made me forget him quite,
And the strange legend of that summer night.
'Twas one who dealt in pearls and gems with me,
And did such royal merchandise unlade,
The rarest treasures of the earth and sea,
As gave such glorious impetus to trade,
I thought no more of what the Rabbi said.

IX.

Though ever and anon my thoughtful wife,
During those evening walks we loved so well,
Would say to me, "Oh, I would give my life
To hear the Rabbi Nicodemus tell
Of Him who could the raging waters quell."
(HARAN) Well, friend, I have strange sequel to relate.
Here is my shady garden close beside;
So, e'er thou hang'st thy offering at the gate,
Come enter in, and wait till eventide,
Or if it please thee, longer time abide.
[*They enter the Garden. . After refreshments, Haran commences.*]

X.

(HARAN) Now nearly seven weeks their course have
rolled,
Since, while the Passover was kept in state,
Jesus, of whom our holy Rabbi told,
Suffered to death a malefactor's fate,
Led to His shameful cross without the gate.
'Tis true, He spoke 'gainst priest and Pharisee,
Struck at their barriers with His word of might,
Threw down their strongholds of iniquity;
And on the waiting people poured the light;
'This was the secret cause of all their spite.

XI.

He gained some true disciples from the crowd
Who flocked to hear His heavenly ministry ;
Alas ! the rest like me to Mammon bowed.
There is one thought which gives to me the key,
Unlocking all this seeming mystery ;
How, so soon after His triumphant hour,
Entering the city, that His wily foes
Could turn around the changing people's power,
So that against Him they as one arose.
The cause of this I will in time disclose.

XII.

His life, a river, rolling from its source,
We saw in bright progression onward move,
Grow more and more resistless in its course,
In mighty miracles, in deeds of love,
In speech all human eloquence above.
All this in multitudes the faith awoke,
That this was He to olden prophets shown ;
Destined to break the Gentiles iron yoke,
Great David's Tabernacle fallen down
To build again and wear his kingly crown.

XIII.

Of late a miracle of Godlike power,
A fitting climax for career so great,
Deepened the master feeling of the hour :
Increased to passion marvellous to relate,
The people's reverence and the priesthood's hate.
There dwelt in Bethany a family—
And many in the city say they were

In ancient times a race of high degree—
A brother and two sisters ;—often there,
Would Jesus in His journeyings repair.

XIV.

He held with them a tender, sacred tie—
Time will not now suffice me here to tell
How came about so deep a unity ;
But it was sweet to Jesus there to dwell,
Where love like Eden's dew around Him fell.
It happened He to Galilee had gone,
And on the bed of pain was Lazarus laid.
Though instantly the news to Him was borne :
Yet strange to tell, He went not to their aid ;
Two days passed on, yet still the Lord delayed.

XV.

Then spake He : " Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but lo !
I go that I may waken him from sleep."
" Lord, if he sleeps he will do well we know ;
Good for the sick are slumbers long and deep,"
His meaning Christ no more will secret keep.
" Lazarus is dead," He said, " and I am glad
I was not there, that ye may now believe,"
And His disciples, now no longer sad,
His words with faith and reverence receive,
And some the hiding of His power perceive.

XVI.

Meantime to Bethany by friendship led,
With many Jews I went on the fourth morn,
To comfort the two sisters o'er their dead.
We came, but Martha suddenly was gone ;

We thought she went beside the grave to mourn.
Mary sat till ; no words her grief expressed ?
The silent flow of tears all uncontrolled,
Alone the fullness of that grief confessed ?
Her hair hung loosened from its golden fold,
And glimmering through her tears, her eyes were
lovely to behold.

XVII.

Though both the sisters had the tidings learned
Of Jesus, their loved Master, near at hand,
Yet all delay ; Martha's quick spirit spurned
While Mary waited for her Lord's command.
(The love of both He well could understand.)
Martha has gone to meet Him on His way,
And when she met Him, words that seemed to chide
Broke forth from anguish at the long delay—
"Hadst Thou been here, my brother had not died!"
Yet Faith still struggling with her grief she cried,

XVIII.

"But well I know, Oh ! Master, even now
All that the Son shall ask He must obtain."
Then Jesus answered with a kindling brow,
"Thy brother Lazarus shall rise again."
"I know," she said, "Our Faith is not in vain,"
(Though still with rising faith her doubt held strife.)
"That in the resurrection he shall rise."
"I am the Resurrection and the Life!"
Jesus with power unutterable cries,
The immediate glory pouring from His eyes.

XIX.

Then did she in her soul such light receive
That "Thou art Christ," (most fervently she said,)
"The Son of God, I verily believe."
Thus owning His the power to raise the dead ;
And quickly then upon her way she sped,
Secretly to her sister with the news ;
For faithful ones knew in that dangerous day
The malice of the unbelieving Jews,
Laying in wait in many a guileful way
Their blessed Lord and Master to betray.

XX.

A sign is given, and Mary leaves her seat ;
Her sister Martha stands without the gate ;
With a low whisper and embrace they meet,
And hastening onward not a moment wait.
We saw, and pitying their lonely state,
Behold, we said, these sisters go to weep
Over the grave, and we will with them go.
It moves our hearts to see a grief so deep,
Let us our kindest sympathy bestow,
While mingling with their own, our tears fraternal
flow.

XXI.

Yet not towards the grave the sisters bent
Their flying footsteps as if winged by woe,
But through the open country road they went.
We followed in their wake, with steps more slow,
Wondering and querying whither they would go.
The road turned sharply down, leading between

Tall, graceful sycamores in stately pride.
Suddenly before us stood the Nazarene,
And Mary weeping as she saw Him, cried,
"Lord, hadst Thou been here, Lazarus had not died."

XXII.

(ENOS) How looked the Prophet at that time, I pray ?
Tell me, I know that thou canst picture well.
(HARAN) No mortal limner might the work essay,—
Can words describe the Indescribable ?
Could earthly language Heavenly glories tell,
Then might I the pure loveliness portray,
Illumining those lineaments divine,
The marvelous presence I beheld that day,
Where the real majesty of heaven did shine,
Through a humanity as weak as mine.

XXIII.

Jesus in spirit groans, through strong desires,
O'er the pale foe to win the victory.
"Where have ye laid him?" in low voice inquires,
The tremulous answer was, "Lord, come and see."
Thereat He wept so long and heavily,
"Behold, how well He loved him," was our word ;
(At sight of this fond flow of tears He shed) ;
Yet if He has such power as we have heard,
Why is good Lazarus numbered with the dead,
Why came He not before the spirit fled ?"

XXIV.

We stood in awe around the rocky cave ;
Still was the earth, and still the watching skies.

A stone concealed the opening of the grave ;
 "Take ye away the stone," the Master cries,
 The rising glory gathering in His eyes.
Then Martha : "Lord, 'tis four days since he died ;
 Corruption has begun its work abhorred."
"Said I not unto thee," Jesus replied,
 "That if thou truly wouldst believe My word,
 Thine eyes should see the glory of the Lord ?"

XXV.

Then Jesus raised His eyes so gloriously :
 "Father, I thank Thee Thou hast heard My prayer,
And well I know Thou always hearest Me ;
 But for their sakes do I this witness bear.—
 These listening multitudes who present are ;
I said it, that they may the truth receive,
 That I, as sent from Thee, on earth appear,
And with the heart, may on My name believe."
 He ceased the holy words of mystery dear,
 Which the still heaven and earth seem hushed to hear.

XXVI.

And now behold Him,—who awhile ago,
 At thought of Lazarus and the mourning band,
Sat down and wept in weakness and in woe,—
 Before the open tomb, behold Him stand,
 With life and death at His supreme command.
"Lazarus, come forth," He cries with a loud voice ;
 Out from the grave he cometh at that word—
Out from the grave !—Let heaven and earth rejoice !
 Bound hand and foot he stands before the Lord,
 Full of the fresh new life through all his being
 poured.

XXVII.

Hear to the simple words midst all this glow,—
This crowning excellence of Godlike power,—
These simple words, "Loose him and let him go."
The humility and grandeur of that hour,
How does it over human greatness tower !
Men flaunt their vaunted fame in God's pure sight,
But mark the lowliness and majesty
Commingle in the Son of His delight.
The very dead are raised ; yet look and see
Even then how meekly shines the true Divinity !

XXVIII.

How many of the Jews believed that day ;
(I marvel there was left one doubting one !)
But some most strangely blinded went their way,
And told the Pharisees what He had done.
Then the dark plot against His life begun.
Throughout the country, went the great renown
Of this, of all His works the most sublime.
But in Jerusalem the priesthood frown
Against the rising spirit of the time,
And fast their hatred ripens into crime.

XXIX.

Yet through the masses of the people went
A growing feeling daily rising higher,
That in this mighty Prophet, God had sent
To longing Israel her true Messiah,
Whose promised advent fired her sacred lyre.
Hopeful they looked deliverance to see,
And as the day of Passover drew near,

Wherever there a group of Jews might be,
Were earnest questionings ; " Will He be here,"
Some from excited hopes and some from love sincere.

XXX.

After the miracle as Jesus knew
And needed not that any should disclose,
The envious hate that would His life pursue,
To avoid the present rage of priestly foes,
And bide His time, He to the desert goes,
A time of rest, retirement, and prayer,
But when six days to Passover remain,
Leaving the City Ephraim where they were
With His disciples (an increasing train)
Jesus appears in Bethany again.

XXXI.

How welcome to the blessed trio there !
Upon their threshold, beautiful His feet.
The zealous Martha must a feast prepare,
Yet calls not now her sister from that seat,
To the rapt listener more than ever sweet.
Soon of His reappearance there we heard ;
As Bethany is an adjacent town,
The heart of old Jerusalem was stirred,
And many to the village hastened down ;
I with the rest despite the Rabbi's frown.

XXXII.

The supper for the company was spread,
When we arrived. Among the guests we trace

Him who was newly risen from the dead.

Martha was serving with her wonted grace,

But Lazarus at the table had a place,

The very sight of him awaking praise.

Glowing and fresh with new found life he seemed,

And ever as on Jesus turned his gaze,

His eyes with silent hallelujahs beamed

To Him who had from death, body and soul re-
deemed.

XXXIII.

I saw not Mary till she forward came.

On her had fallen an inspiration great ;

The inflowing spirit shook her conscious frame,

For the young prophetess must consecrate

Her much loved Master to His coming fate.

She bears a box of spikenard in her hands.

No costlier ointment rich Arabia knows.

With reverential pause beside Him stands.

She breaks the box ; then trembling nearer draws,

And on her Saviour's head the last anointing pours.

XXXIV.

While the rare odor fills the room around,

And the disciples reverence the deed,

One sordid soul among their ranks is found,

And moved by envy and his grasping greed,

From him these jealous murmurings proceed.

"Why was this waste of precious ointment made,

Whose costly price would give the poor relief?"

This Judas said not caring for the poor,

But that he had the bag and was a thief,

Nay more was, in his heart, a traitor to his Chief.

XXXV.

The Master speaks with calm authority.

“ Let her alone, for verily I say,
Mary has wrought a holy work on Me,
Coming beforehand in prophetic way,
To anoint My body for the burial day ;
And whereso'er this Gospel shall be shown
Throughout the world, the pious deed ye blame
Shall as her sweet memorial be known,
And consecrate to ever living fame,
The blessed memory of this woman's name.

XXXVI.

The poor ye always have, not always Me ;
These ye may always bless ; I go from you.”
He ceased. The night was waning fast, and we
Our homeward course from Bethany pursue,
Our thoughts were many, but our words were few.
The sight of Lazarus to life restored,
The act whose meaning we not yet discerned,
That mystical anointing of the Lord,
We pondered much upon, as we returned,
Till now the temple's lights before us burned.

XXXVII.

Jerusalem's great crowd was much increased.
Fast through all ranks the stirring rumor flies,
He is at hand, and coming to the feast.
I saw the popular current stronger rise,
Nor did what followed take me by surprise.
At Bethany when night to dawn gave place,
Around the Master came the faithful band.

Towards Jerusalem He sets His face,
But first to two disciples gives command
To hasten to a village near at hand.

XXXVIII.

There at the meeting of two roads ye find
An ass and foal as yet by man unused,
And after ye her tethered colt unbind,
Bring both to me—ye shall not be refused,
For when the owner asks why they are loosed,
And ye shall say the Lord of them hath need,
Immediately will both to me be led
Even by the owner with a ready speed.
The two disciples on their errand sped,
And found it even as the Lord had said.

XXXIX.

Tell ye the Daughter of Zion, behold,
Having salvation now cometh thy King—
Thus sung thy bards and thy prophets of old—
Thy sweet psalms of glory exultingly sing,
Wide open the gates of thine excellence fling,
Riding an ass and the foal of an ass,
In the beauty of meekness, He cometh to reign.
Go spread down thy garments the way He shall pass,
Wave thy green palms, shout again and again,
Jesus, Messiah, the kingdom obtain.

XL.

The tidings to the city comes that morn,
Which much the excited, earnest people charms,
Of Jesus on His way in triumph borne—

How they rent down the branches of the palms,
And waved them as He went, singing their glorious
psalms.

On hearing this issuing from every street,
Another multitude their branches bring,
And hasten through the open gates to greet,
With praises jubilant, the coming King,
And loudly thus their royal anthem sing.

XLI.

Hosanna in the Highest! thus sang Israel the saved,
Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the
Lord;

Blessed be the Kingdom of our Father David,
That cometh in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the Highest! thus they sang in full ac-
cord.

Oh! nature grew the brighter in the voices of their
cheering.

Those fair, auroral skies seemed to keep the jubilee,
Flushed warmer in the light of His glorious appearing.
The birds their matins singing so sweet in every
tree,

As though in their notes revealing, This is He! This
is He!

XLII.

But when Jerusalem appeared in sight,
Even as they came to Olivet's descent,
Spread out in beauty, in the morning light,
While the ascending hallelujahs rent
The conscious glowing, echoing, firmament,

Over the Prophet's brow a shadow swept,
And tenderness that could not be repress,
And at the height of glory Jesus wept—
Wept o'er His own Jerusalem the blest—
And in prophetic words her coming doom exprest.

XLIII.

The excited people noted not that day,
So high their own aspiring hopes take wing,
The fearful portent that His words convey,
But still the exultant hallelujahs sing,
Till rocks and valleys with the echoes ring.
Swept through the open gates, the mighty throng,
Towards the Holy Temple onward pressed,
All ripe in faith, all rapturous in song.
Even the little children joined the rest,
And their's of all the praises pleased Him best.

XLIV.

(ENOS) How went it on—this wondrous history?
For I must hear it to its termination.
(HARAN) I will go on to unfold this mystery.
The people's heart was hot with expectation,
That He by Godlike power would save the nation.
Many succeeding days they momentarily
Hoped, that His royal entrance went before
His showing forth as Shiloh gloriously,
And that He should to Judah's hand restore
The imperial sceptre, to depart no more.

XLV.

Else why should He, the people reasoning say,
Enter the Holy City as her King ;

And when to David's royal Son that day,
Children hosannas in the temple sing
And Pharisees would check their infant offering,
Why did He say: "If hushed their joyful shout,—
The sweet perfection of all praise to me,—
The very stones around us would cry out.
Yea, if ye hush their voices, praise shall be,
Though the dull rocks break forth in grateful harmony."

XLVI.

I said the general heart was all on flame;
Nor yet the Pharisees their wish fulfil,
Though with insidious craft and artful blame
Daily they worked to change the people's will.
The people anxious wait—The Master still
No aim to make Himself a monarch shows.
Serene, majestic in the holy place,
Wonderful wisdom from His lips o'erflows,
So sweet the wisdom, and so great the grace,
God talketh with His creatures face to face.

XLVII.

But that day's triumph seemed to be an act,
Which from His after history appears
An isolated and prophetic fact,
Foretelling what shall come in latter years,
After long ages pass of hopes and fears.
But daily listening to His discourse,
Such words as these, were then a mystery,
And yet they struck me with a pleasing force:

"And I, if I be lifted on the tree,
Become the ground of hope and draw all men to
Me."

XLVIII.

But at that time, blinded like all the rest
Who more the worldly, than the heavenly seek,
I longed to see an earthly crown invest
That glorious brow; but when I heard Him speak,
All earthly honors seemed for Him too weak.
It seemed as though His being's primal flower,
Its human blossoming of truth and grace,
Condensed its sweetness in that crisis hour.
A strange attractive sadness o'er His face,
So won my heart, 'twas hard to leave the place.

XLIX.

Such golden parables as left His lips!
More lovely than before His doctrine flows;
Yet then the cloud that should awhile eclipse
The Light of Israel, in the distance rose—
On the horizon's verge its shadow grows,
A day or two before the feast began,
I talked with some and found their hearts were sore,
A bitter disappointment rankling ran,
He was their King and David's Son no more,
And not the anointed Christ foretold of yore.

L.

A Pharisee was talking to a crowd,
And I, none knowing of my mind, drew near.

Oh! cunning was the speech, wherewith he bowed
The people to his will. I paused to hear,
And these the words that pained my listening ear :
"Ye dwellers at Jerusalem," said he,
"Beneath the shadow of your temple dear
Had never left your homes this Man to see,
But many strangers at our feast appear,
New to our faith, and to our customs here.

LI.

These, spite our graver counsels, outward draw
Your thoughtless multitudes with loud acclaim,
To meet the Nazarene, as with a score
Of Galilean followers He came,
The Son of David, His assumed name.
Their turbulent hosannas fill the air ;
They praise and glorify each wondrous deed,
Though well they know our holy men declare,
He with the Prince of Devils is agreed,
And thence these powerful miracles proceed.

LII.

Disturber He both of the church and state,
Against Him wisely from the first we strove,
And should we doom Him to a traitor's fate,
Great Cæsar will our loyalty approve,
And heavy taxes from your wealth remove."
(Enos) And what came next? The turning of the tide
Is not more sure than popular reverse ;
A veering wind changing from side to side,
Hard on the people's blessing waits their curse :
But go thou on the story to rehearse.

LIII.

(HARAN) That very night, the Paschal supper o'er,
Walking abroad to enjoy the evening air,
Jesus with His beloved friends, I saw
Cross the brook Cedron, to a garden there,
Where He would often with the twelve repair.
I often watched them on their way before,
But on this evening as their course I trace,
There comes upon my soul, such reverent awe,
Yet such attraction, that with slackened pace
I followed in their wake, till near the place.

LIV.

But when they all had entered in, why then
If there had been a guard of angels sent,
All visible to sight of mortal men,
They could not more my following steps prevent ;
And thus repelled, I at a distance went,
Hidden by a clump of trees, I took my seat ;
Spell bound and fastened down I seemed to be,
Unable to go on or to retreat,
Looking towards the Garden, where to me
Even the olive trees waved consciously.

LV.

Oh, how I longed even then to join with them !
But could not waken the courageous thought,
Unused against the popular tide to stem ;
But while contending passions in me wrought,
The tramp of coming feet attention caught,
And I beheld an armed band advance,
Weapons and torches flashing in my sight.

I knew their traitor leader at a glance.—

False Judas,—Oh what treachery and spite
Lurked in the darkness of his face that night!

LVI.

They hastened to the Garden, I grew faint
And swooned away, and visions then were shown
Too holy to be seen, even by a saint;
For in that trance I saw where prostrate thrown,
Jesus the mystic winepress treads alone.
I saw Him in an agony of prayer,
No help, the passion of His struggle stayed,
Till the great drops of blood, fell to the ground.
The Father's answer then no more delayed,
An angel hastens with the succoring aid.

LVII.

And while with awe the vision I behold,
A sudden terror o'er my heart was brought;
A voice cried in my hearing "He is sold!"
It woke me from my trance. With anxious thought
And hasty steps, the olive grove I sought.
Master and men had gone, but in one place
Where trodden grass showed where His steps had
been,
I thrilled to see the recent crimson trace
Of blood among the flowers and verdure green.
Ah then 'twas true the vision I had seen.

LVIII.

"Jesus is sold!" again that voice I hear.
Back to my home I haste with trembling soul,
That watchful night no sleep to me drew near.

As through my veins a burning fever stole,
Came thronging thoughts I could no more control;
But when the long and wretched night was done—
The lingering hours that I had counted o'er—
Just when the purpling clouds foretell the sun,
I fell asleep, but wakened with a roar
Of maddening voices—Springing to the floor,

LIX.

I to my casement haste with trembling frame,
With shaking hand, aside the curtain draw.
Rushing and roaring, down the people came,
Led by their priests and elders, but before
Centurion and Roman band, I saw—
Oh, sight of sights that checked my bated breath,
Bearing His cross upon His bleeding back,
Jesus of Nazareth they lead to death.
Oh, cruel cross, the infernal Roman rack!
Oh, precious dropping blood, wetting the dusty
track!

LX.

Oh, ragged bloody crown of thorns entwined
By ruffian hands in taunting mockery;
Oh, hear again the furious shout behind,
Where some whose late hosannas reached the sky,
Now, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" cry.
One only object caught away my soul,
So that no more I heeded the multitude—
The victim's face, thus hurried to the goal,
Where shone through all the torture, dust, and
blood,
Such glorious purpose, and such changeless good.

LXI.

His face with such unconquered sweetness beamed,
Surrounded by this raging enmity,
Heaven in the very midst of hell it seemed.
Sick as I was, such passion seized on me,
I had to follow Him to Calvary,
The fever lending me its burning force.
Reaching the hill, without the power to fly,
I had to see Him nailed to the cross.
Oh, Heaven! I had to see it raised on high,
And hear the jeerings of the passers by.

LXII.

A witness, suffering with Him all the time,
I had to see Him in slow tortures die—
See all His agony, severe, sublime—
I had to hear the exceeding bitter cry,
Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabacthani!
The words, the deeds I hear, as each transpires,
Sweet incense offered with that Sacrifice
Consuming on in pain's intensest fires,
Until I hear the cry as He expires,
'Tis finished! Glory lights the languid eyes,
Jesus of Nazareth, bows His head and dies.

LXIII.

That instant, Lo, what mighty tokens sent
The attending priests who in the temple walk.
Behold, the veil from top to bottom rent,
The solid earth doth quake, and every rock
Is riven assunder by the appalling shock.
Yea, some new power does death's dominion shake,
Some graves of saints are opened as He dies,

The dead within them from their sleep awake.
Struck at the awful sight with terror and surprise,
"Truly, this was the Son of God," the amazed Cen-
turion cries.

LXIV.

Some neighbors bore me home, and long I lay
So low, no conscious life within me stirred,
Exhausted by the experience of that day ;
But after my recovery, then I heard,
He had fulfilled His own prophetic word.
There came an earthquake, just as the gold dawning
Upward its earliest rays of light had thrown,
Belting the eastern sky on the third morning,
Long e'er the sun's red rays the mountains crown—
And lo, the Angel of the Lord came down.

LXV.

He comes, and rolls the ponderous stone away
(Such excellence of strength the angels know,)
From Joseph's new made grave where Jesus lay,
His countenance like lightning, and the flow
Of His fair raiment whiter far than snow.
The keepers of the tomb are struck with dread ;
Such sudden terror does their souls surprise,
They tremble, quake, and fall around as dead :
None but the glorious Angel's gladdening eyes
Behold the Conqueror of the grave arise.

LXVI.

None but those angel eyes of purest flame,
All luminously holy as they are,
Could see Him as from out the grave He came,
Bearing of every wound the sacred scar,

Yet fresh and beautiful, the Bright, the Morning Star.
I almost see Him at the entrance stand,—
He who for us the powers of darkness braved :
The keys of death and hell are in His hand,
And such sweet triumph on His face engraved—
The wondrous work is done, the world is saved.

LXVII.

Before He left, the Lord commanded them,
(And faithfully His orders they attend)
“Tarry ye still here at Jerusalem ;
A few days only after I ascend,
I will the promise of the Father send.”
So daily in an upper room they meet,
In instant prayer, from morn till eventide,
Jeered at by thoughtless mockers in the street,
While graver men in graver terms deride
What they call madness and persistent pride.

LXVIII.

Friend, three days brings the Sabbath ; the next day
Is Pentecost. I pray thee do not seek
Thy home as yet, but be prevailed to stay
Over the Feast with me, and in the week
We'll go and hear these men of whom I speak.
(ENOS) Good friend, thus long I joy to be thy guest,
For much thou knowest, and much I long to know ;
But now the sun looks to the kindling west,
And while new thoughts within my bosom glow,
Unto the temple with my gift I go.

INTRODUCTION TO PART SECOND.

'Tis the morning, early morning—
Eastern glories are reflected
From the west in rosy purple,
Touching every russet mountain;
And along the silent valleys,
Every flower now lifts her censer
Full of breathing fragrant incense,
Praying for the dewy blessing—
Praying for the golden sunshine.
Not yet clear the face of heaven,
But every where there is a breaking,
And the little clouds are whispering
To one another of fair weather,
As the blue breaks down between them,—
Telling they shall soon be melting
In the coming fiery sunshine;
And the clouds like tender lovers
Part and weep and change their color.
Every where is softer beauty,
Than if cloudless fell the day-beam.
Now, ere yet the stir beginneth,
While the day is in its cradle,

Readest thou in the still expansion
Of the mellowing sky above thee,
A sweet augury of something
Secret in the young day's bosom ?
In the wind among the branches,
In the very dew that falleth
Like some consecrating unction,
There has gone abroad a spirit
As of holy preparation,
Reverential, yet reviving.
In the sighing of the cedars,
In the reflux wave that greeteth
The green banks of holy Jordan,
All seemeth as in happy waiting ;
And the temple on Moriah
Gleameth like a mount of diamonds
In the glorious, gorgeous sunlight—
Showeth like a type terrestrial
Of the far-off Holy City,
Of Jerusalem the golden.

PART SECOND.

I.

(HARAN) A goodly day, friend Enos, for, behold,
O'er fleeting clouds the sun has risen fair,
Tinging our temple's top with flaming gold.
Thither at once thus early we repair,
Even now the Nazarenes are gathering there ;
For these few days they stay from morn till eve,
Convened together in the house of prayer,
According to the word by Jesus given,
Until the Father's gift descend from heaven.

II.

(ENOS) How swift we came ! now in the temple here,
Haran, the company so well you know,
As passing on successive groups appear,
To me the leading ones among them show.
First, who is this ? Some chosen one, I trow,
For, oh ! he hath upon his angel face
A settled rapture—an abiding glow,
As heaven already were his dwelling place,
So great the fullness, and so rich the grace.

III.

Yet though such meekness does his look control,
Such warmth is blended with the gentleness,
He hath by nature sure a fiery soul,
Yet love subdueth now nature's excess ;
And gazing on that face, I must confess,
Haran, it bears an aspect so divine,
I long the love within me to possess,
Of which that countenance gives such clear sign.
God of my fathers, be that spirit mine !

IV.

(HARAN) This is the loved disciple, John, so blest
He could in his simplicity draw near
His heavenly Master more than all the rest,
Because he had the love that casts out fear ;
And tenderly did Jesus' trust appear,
When in His final tortures as He died,
He gave into his hands that mother dear,
Whom John now duteously leads by his side,
As if she were by nature's ties allied.

V.

See the blest mother pass along with him.
You may not see her fairly through that veil ;
Her face is sweeter than a seraph's hymn,
For although years have told a saddening tale
Since first the greeting angel said " All hail,"
Of grace, through all her pain, she feels no loss,
But all it was to be His mother knew,
As she beheld Him dying on the cross,
And Simeon's prophecy became too true,
Even when the unseen sword had pierced her through.

VI.

Those that are passing now are the eleven.

Seest thou that man ? He is a leading one :

To him was the first revelation given

That Jesus Christ was the Eternal Son ;

Yet Satan partial victory o'er him won.

The powers of darkness did thus far prevail,

That on the night when they the Master tried,

He, cowering, felt his vaunted courage fail,

And being pressed he thrice his Lord denied

Before the cock crew twice, to tell 'twas morning
tide.

VII.

But bitter his repentance, so his Lord

Did afterward apostleship restore.

Such lesson did that fearful fall afford,

It made the Saint far humbler than before ;

Experience teaches us a golden lore.

'Tis said when Jesus did his power restore,

He intimated that the day should come,

When the stern death His heavenly Master bore,

Should of the servant's trial be the sum,

And win the immortal crown of martyrdom.

VIII.

(Enos) They all have passed ; but in the temple's porch

We'll walk and talk together, for I feel

Some influence that like a flaming torch

At darkest midnight, does to me reveal

My deepest self, my spirit's eyes unseal.

These few past days I feel the growing force

Of something new within, for hitherto

My life has been of gold a gainful course—
No higher object yet I held in view,
Until Christ's wondrous history I knew.

IX.

"They all of one accord were in one place"—
Lo, such a true accord earth has not known,
Since first in Paradise the evil root
Of enmity by Satan's hand was sown,
Flowering in Cain's deep hate, murder its fruit,
Since then, enlarged by many a spreading shoot
Violence has filled the earth—war's killing thunder
Jarring God's harmony with rupture rude—
But now have Jesus' heartstrings rent asunder,
(When He the breach of Eden's peace made good—)
Restored the broken tie of human brotherhood.

X.

Here is the first response to Bethlehem's song,
In this church union, this divine accord,
As, by the spirit gathered, the whole throng
Sit there in waiting prayer before the Lord.
No words the full, expectant hearts afford,
For supplication has gone up, they know.
Sure that He will the answering grace extend.
See every beaming face with faith aglow,
That in an instant from their Heavenly Friend,
The promise of the Father may descend.

XI.

It comes, it comes, and suddenly, for, lo,
A rushing mighty wind the house has filled.

That prayer is heard, God's answering tokens show
The promise of the Father is fulfilled,
And to the inmost soul they all are thrilled,
As now appearing cloven tongues of fire
Sit upon each of them—The Holy Ghost
His sons and daughters does alike inspire,
Nor can the strong against the weaker boast;
Alike the gift of tongues descends on all the host.

XII.

God of Gods, Light of Lights, Spirit Eternal,
Abundant in comfort, almighty in grace,
Descending to earth in thy glory supernal,
Token that Jesus, High Priest of our race
Has entered for us to the Holiest Place
In the Heaven of Heavens—Good spirit, we bow,
And bless Thee, and praise Thee in love's adoration.
Oh! welcome to earth, gracious spirit, art Thou,
Witness divine of a perfect salvation,
Harbinger Dove of the world's restoration.

XIII.

Even as the Spirit gives them utterance,
They all with other tongues begin to speak,
And, lo, the tidings spread abroad at once,
And wondering multitudes the temple seek.
Jerusalem, this Pentecostal week,
Has strangers from each nation under heaven;
Proselytes gathered to the Jewish fold
Come to keep up the day the law was given.
These with the native throngs shall now behold,
How the New Testament transcends the Old.

XIV.

Coming together all confounded are,
Because each man in his own language hears
The rapt, inspired company declare
That which was dimly seen by ancient seers,
But now in fullest grace to man appears,
Nor shadow of past darkness intervenes.
And what is this, they say, to day upsprung ?
Behold, all these that speak are Galileans ;
How hear we every man in our own tongue
Declare His risen day of whom the prophets sung ?

XV.

A part thus thoughtful hear the word divine ;
But others, unbelievers, mocking say,
These men are drunken full of the new wine.
Thus sin-blind doubt, gropes at the noon of day,
And would the very voice of God gainsay ;
But rising with the eleven, Peter stands
In his new baptism all illuminate,
At once the silenced crowd, his voice commands,
Round him the wondering people congregate,
As if upon his lips hung their eternal fate.

XVI.

‘Dwellers in Judea, know ye what I say,
Hearken ye to the truth my words disclose ;
Seeing it is the third hour of the day,
These are not drunk with wine as ye suppose,
But this is that the Prophet Joel shows,
And it shall come to pass in the last days,
Saith God, I pour my Spirit from on high

Upon all flesh. In its redundant rays
Shall all your sons and daughters prophesy,
Even as the glory of the Lord draws nigh.

XVII.

Your young men shall see visions, your old men
Shall be illumined by prophetic dreams ;
Yea, on My servants and My handmaidens
In equal power, fall the prophetic beams,
God purely equal all His children deems.
(What, shall slaves prophesy ? and can it be
That the most High shall dwell and walk in them ?
Yea, where His Spirit lives, is liberty,
Oh ! let me kiss for this the very hem
Of Jesus robe, and bless, His princely Diadem.)

XVIII.

I will show wonders in the heavens on high,
And signs portentous in the earth below,
Blood, fire, columns of smoke along the sky,
The moon shall wear a lurid fiery glow,
The darkened sun no more its light shall show :
Yet shall it surely come to pass that all,
How e'er before by Satan's power enslaved,
Who on the name of Christ our Lord shall call,
Shall through the power of that dear name be saved.'

XIX.

Then does the Spirit in his speech infuse
Such judgment words as pierce their hearts in twain,
Showing the trembling and convicted Jews
How they the glorious Prince of Life had slain,

When Pilate would have let Him go again.
Now as they hear these things, like fiery darts
The burning words of Peter search them through.
Fear and remorse now pricked them in their hearts.
And pale the conscience stricken people grew,
Crying aloud, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

XX.

Peter with words of healing, here begins.
' Repent, and be baptized in Jesus' name—
Baptized for the remission of your sins.
The Holy Ghost will fall on you, the same
As erst on us in cloven tongues of flame.
Through God's great love you and your children both
Are heirs of Promise; yea, it runs to all
Whom, faithful to His everlasting oath
Made to our Great High Priest before the fall,
The Father in His plenteous grace shall call.'

* * * * *

XXI.

(HARAN) Three thousand in His name baptized to day!
Thy name and mine, dear Enos, with them found!
How poorly words my heart's full joy convey,
The very air of heaven is all around,
Jerusalem to-day is Holy Ground.
Oh! look, the mellowing skies do teem with grace,
Nature herself as a clear mirror shows
The beauty of our loved Redeemer's face.
Were ever, Enos, skies as fair as those,
In all the loveliness of His divine repose?

XXII.

Each ripple of the wave, is melody :
The sweet voiced breezes tell me my salvation.
All things are changed, else is the change in me ;
Around me now appears the new Creation,
And my heart leaps in holy gratulation,
Save that I cannot bear with thee to part,
Since thou and I in Jesus are made one.
There is no shade of grief upon my heart,
But now I see the day is nearly done,
And thou must leave me with the setting sun.

XXIII.

(Exos) Haran, I brought a costly offering here,
But with a priceless Gift I now return ;
For what are all the treasures held so dear,
To the rich love that in my soul does burn ?
My gods of gold and silver now I spurn,
No mention shall be made of rubies rare,
Diamonds and gems are found of little worth,
I own a precious pearl beyond compare ;
My soul, enlarged from the gross chains of earth,
Feels, even to ecstasy, the second birth !

XXIV.

The Rabbi Nicodemus goes with me,
Whose heart the memory of Christ embalms.
Once more he'll tell that blessed history
Which my Elizabeth so deeply charms.
Beneath the shadow of our spreading palms,
Now she will find me ready witness bring
To every truth and fact that he relates

Concerning Jesus Christ, my Lord and King.

But, friend, farewell, the caravan awaits

My coming now outside the city gates.

[*They salute and part.*]

XXV.

(HARAN, *Solus.*) Gone is my friend, and I am left alone—

Yet not alone, Jesus within me dwells.

A conscious peace is o'er my spirit thrown,

So sweet, it even rapture's self excels,

And not a thought, against that peace rebels.

Oh! what a day to me the past has been—

A day more bright than Paradise could boast,

E'er the primeval earth knew shade of sin—

Day of the coming of the Holy Ghost,

O day of blessedness! O sacred Pentecost!

XXVI.

Come gentle night, call out each listening star,

And tell the story to those radiant seers;

Then let them tell it to the worlds afar,

Till all the universe the wonder hears,

Awakening the old music of the spheres,

Whose lovely keynote broken at Adam's fall,

Jarred into discord and the strain was lost.

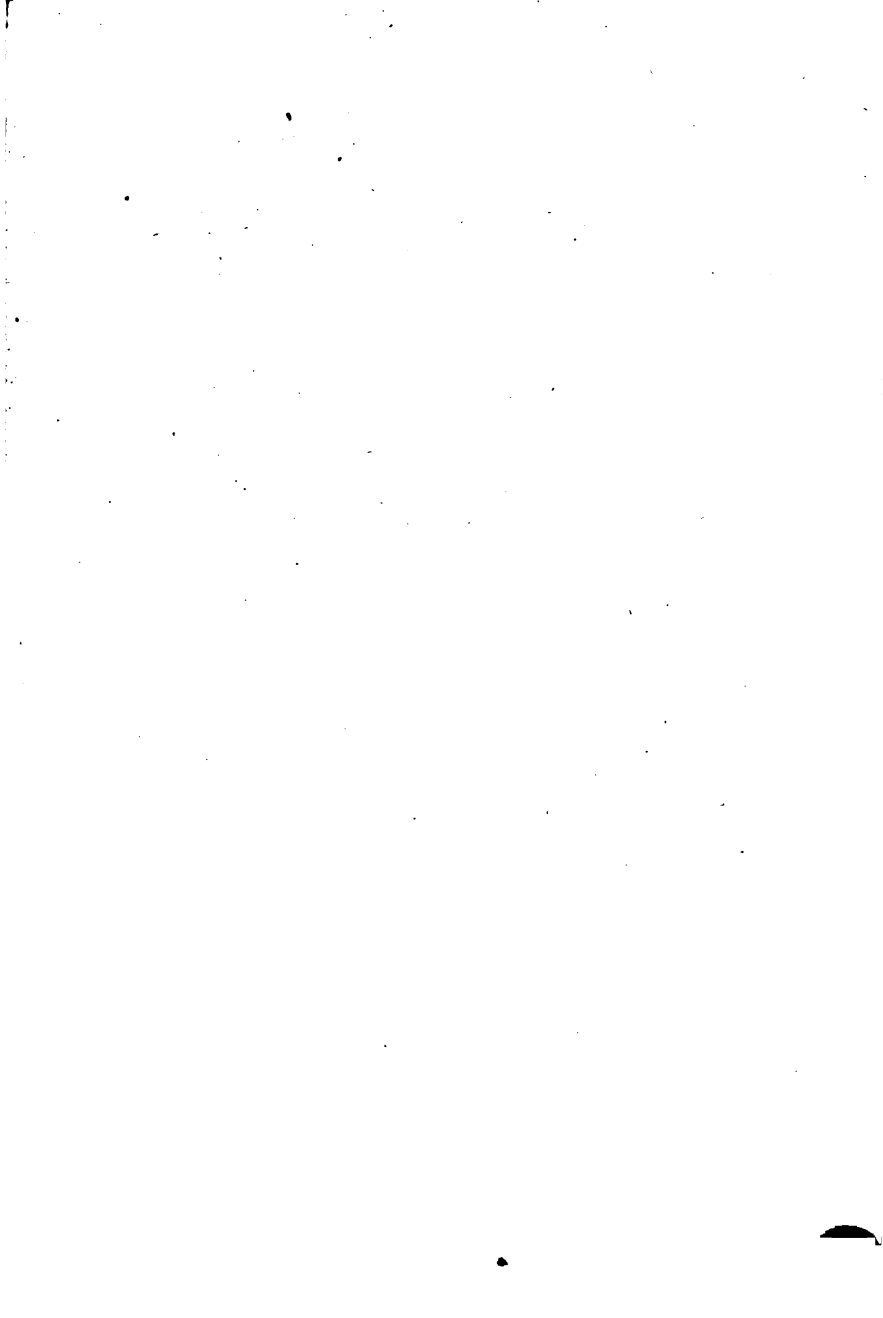
From silence now the chorus grand recall

Be this the refrain of the starry host,

The tongues of flame—the Day of Pentecost!

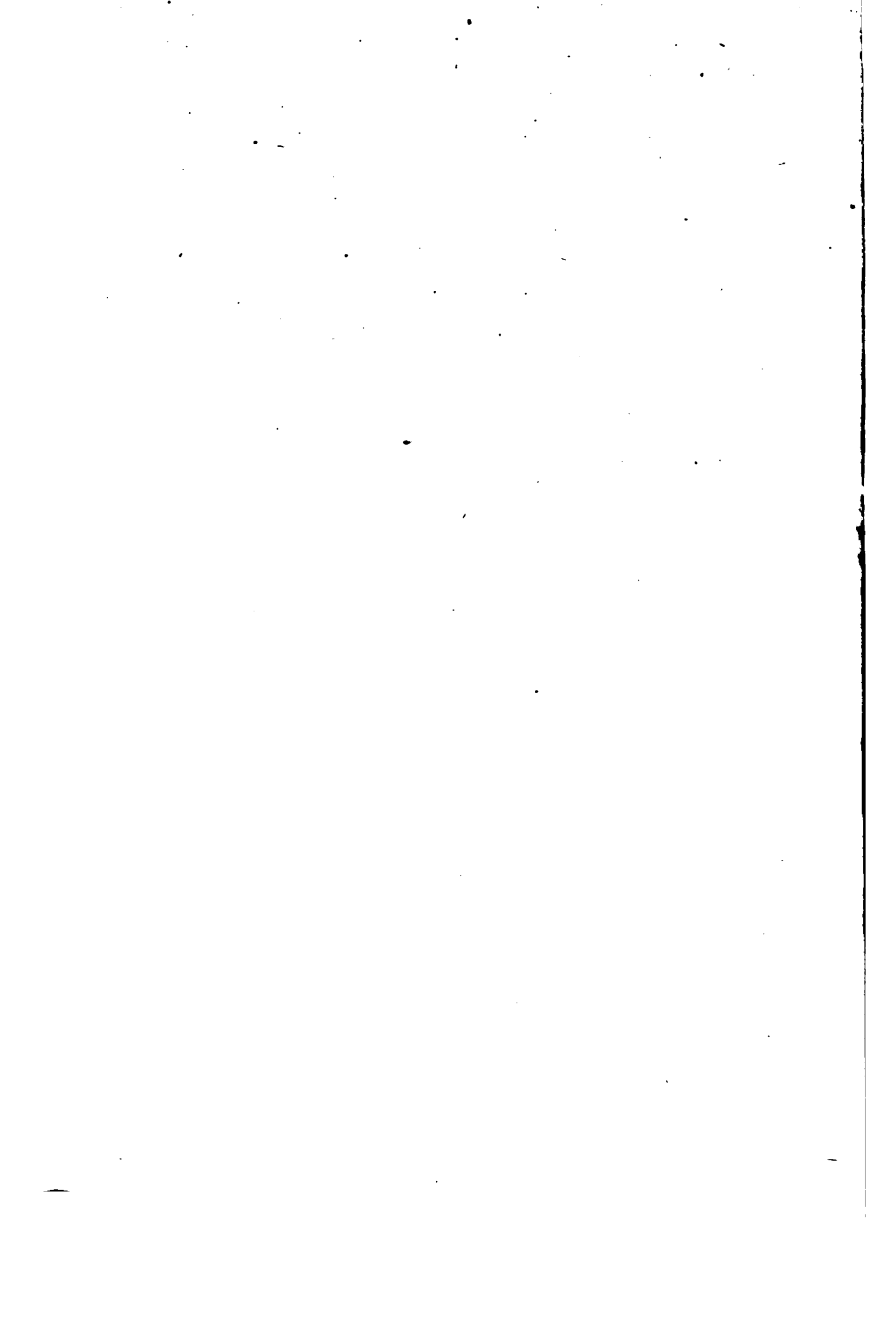
THE END.

NOTE.—Since writing the Advent the author has received new light on the Star seen at the Advent, from the writings of Francis W. Upham.













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